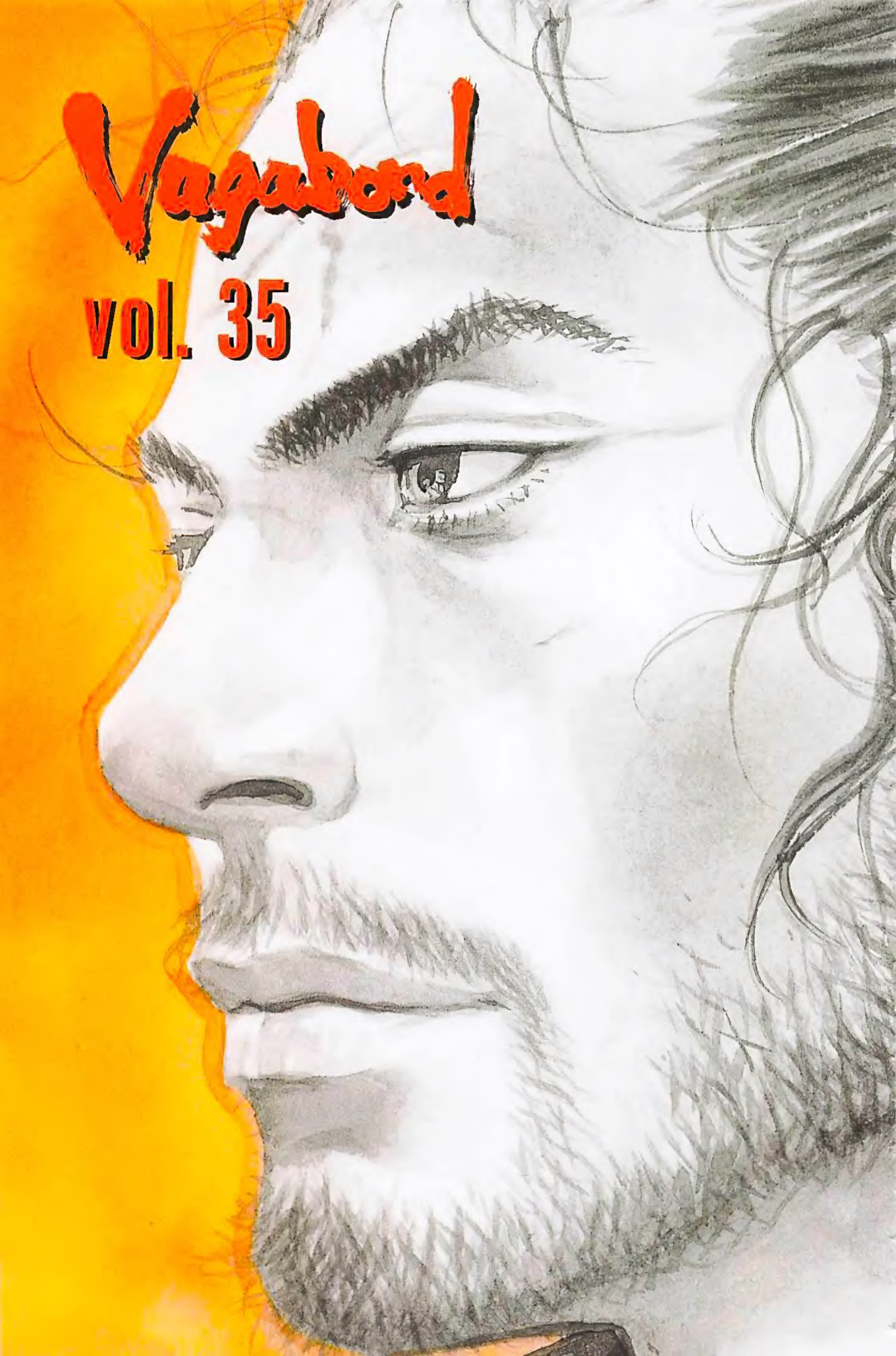
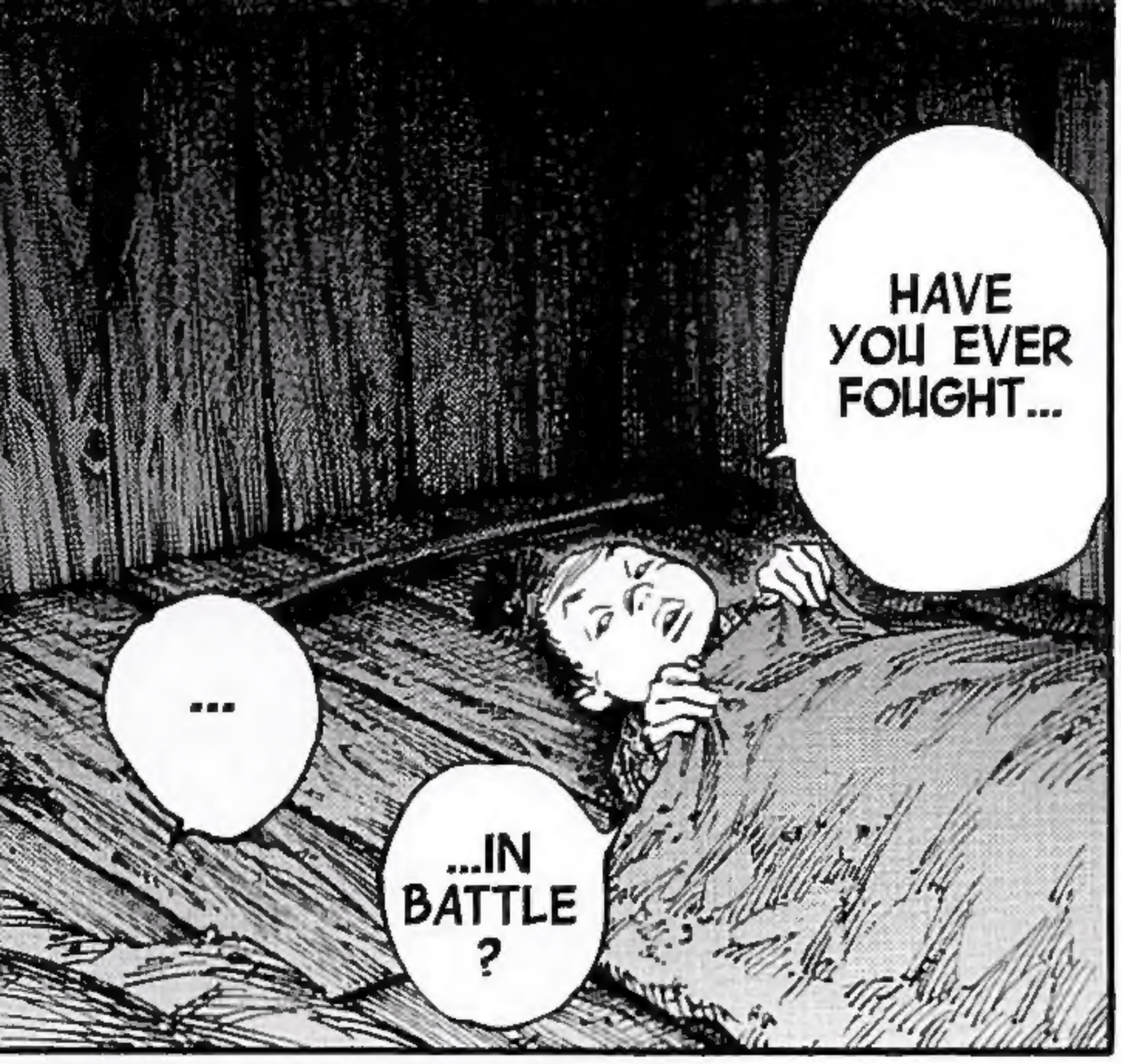
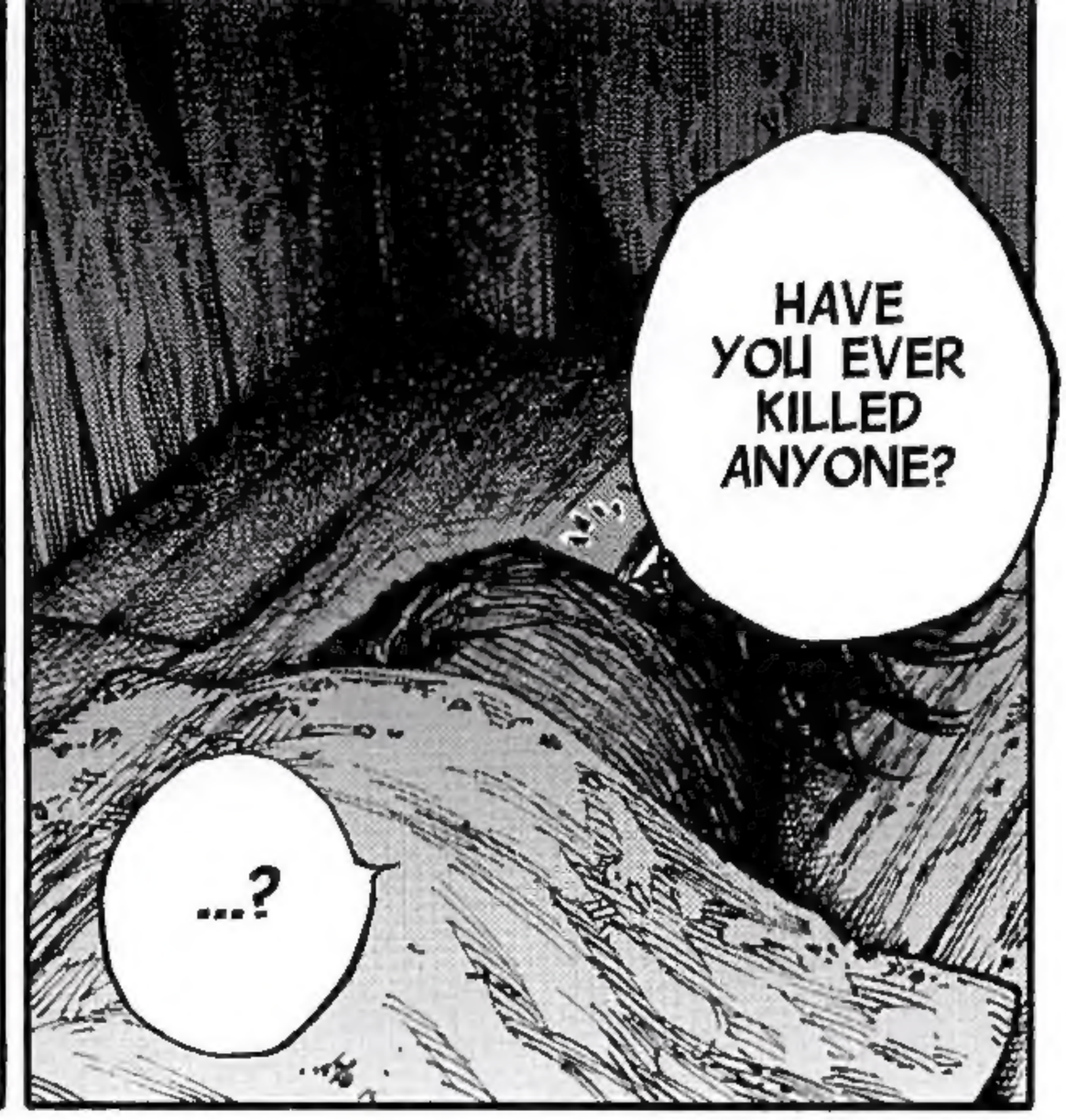
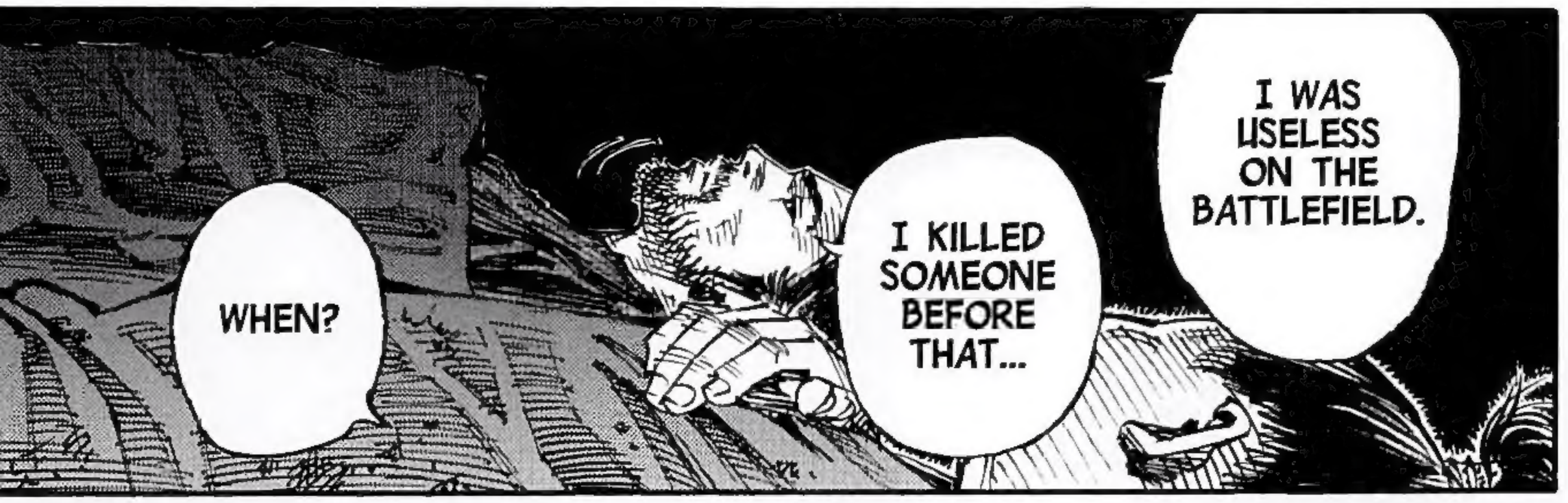
Vagabond

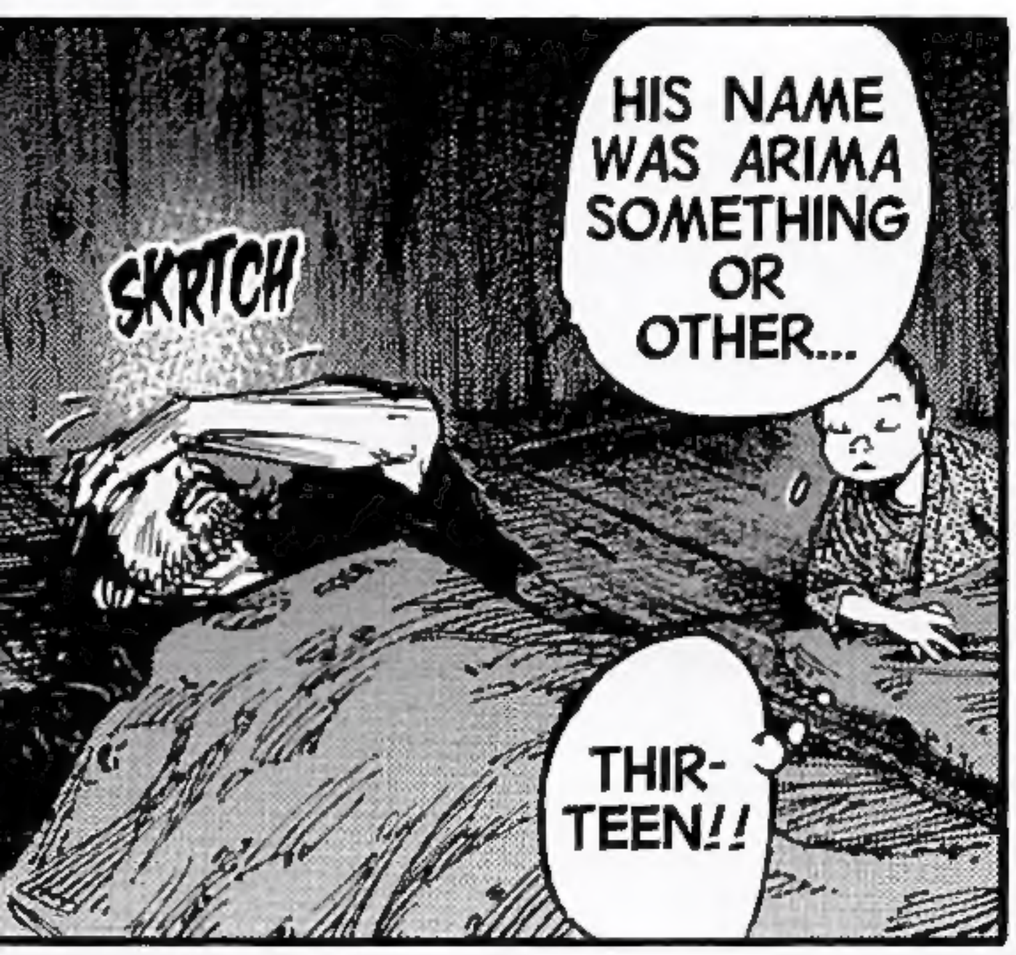
vol. 35

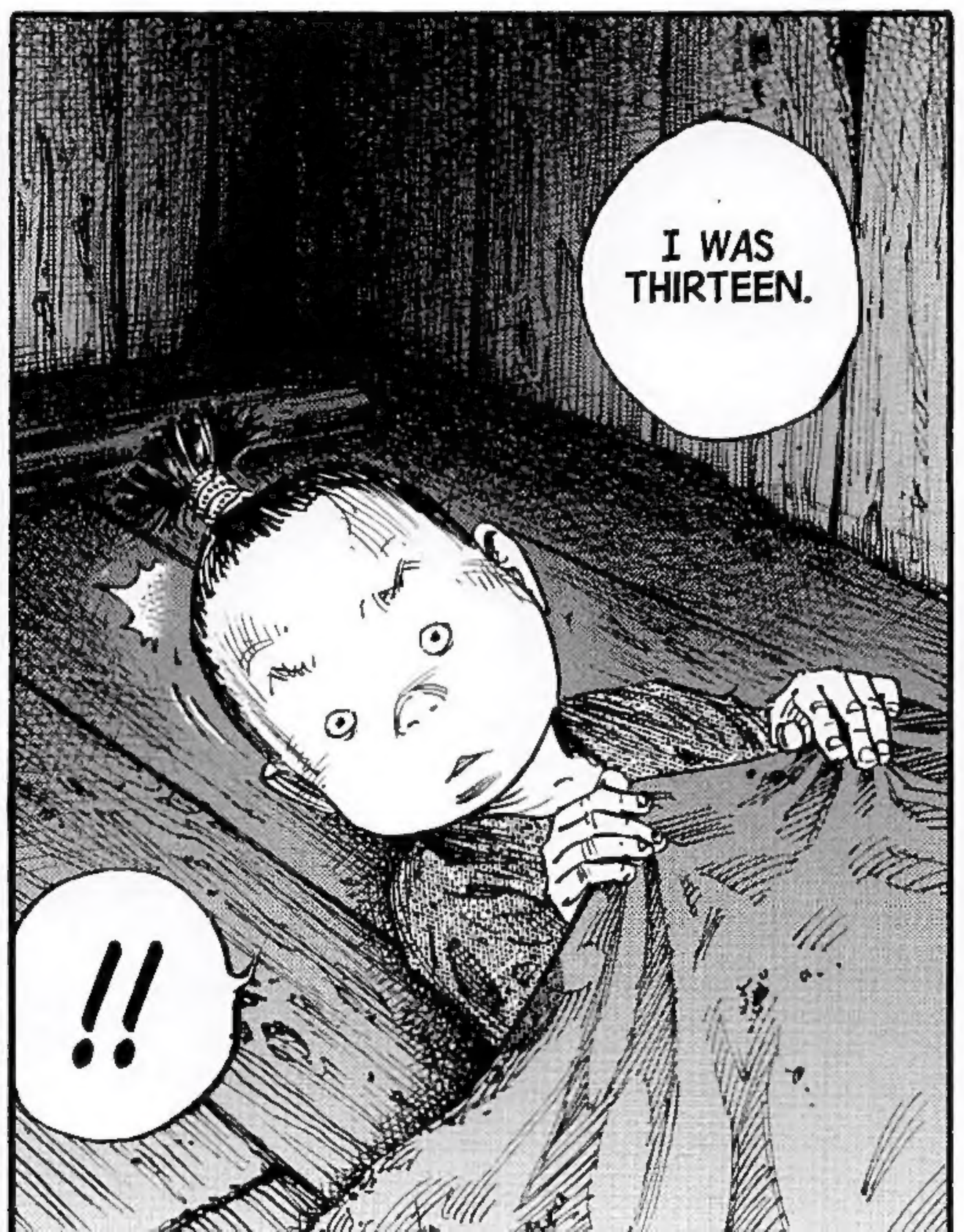



HAVE YOU EVER FOUGHT...
...
...IN BATTLE ?


HAVE YOU EVER KILLED ANYONE?
...?


WHEN?
I KILLED SOMEONE BEFORE THAT...
I WAS USELESS ON THE BATTLEFIELD.


SKRTCH
HIS NAME WAS ARIMA SOMETHING OR OTHER...
THIR-TEEN!!


I WAS THIRTEEN.
!!

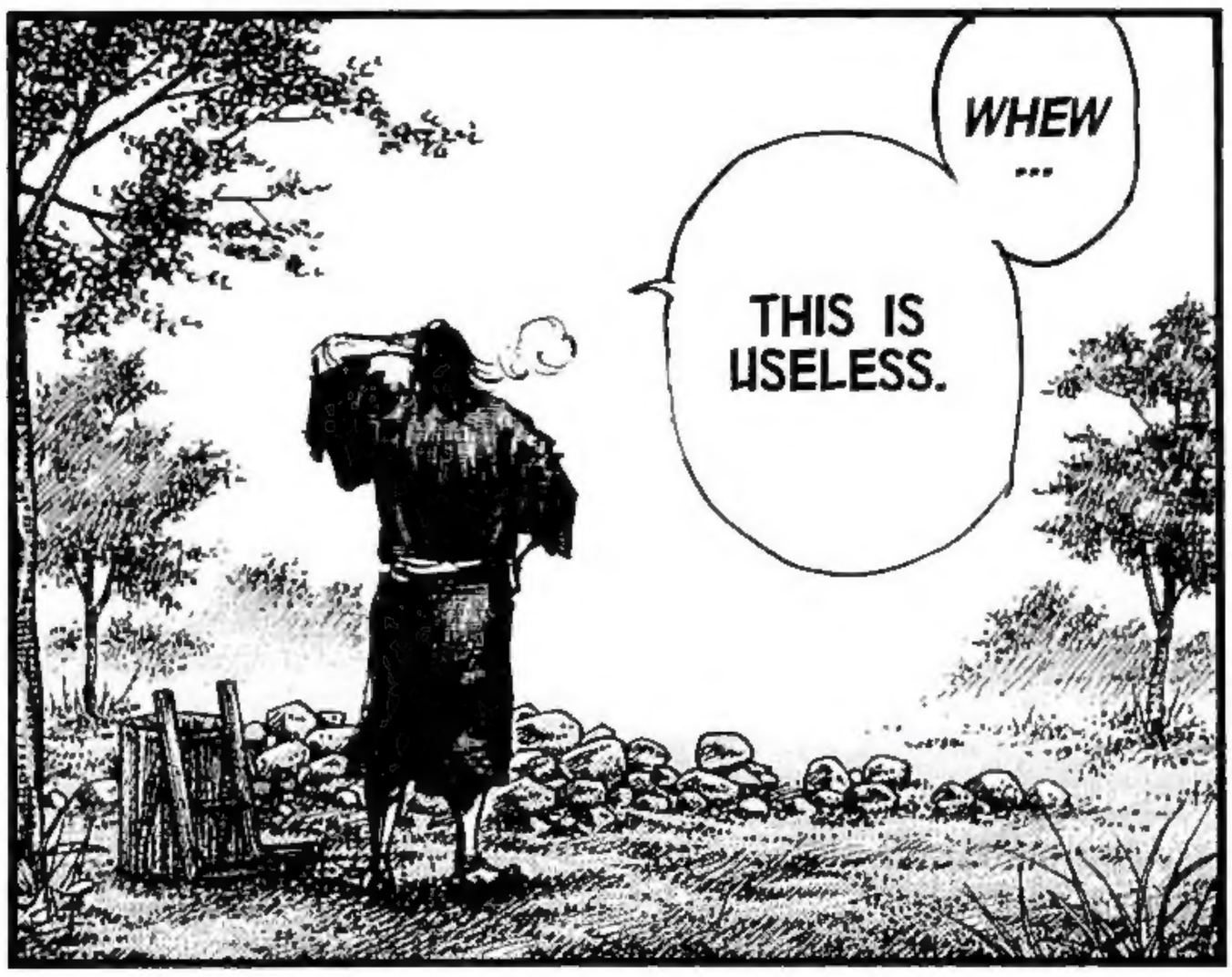
...

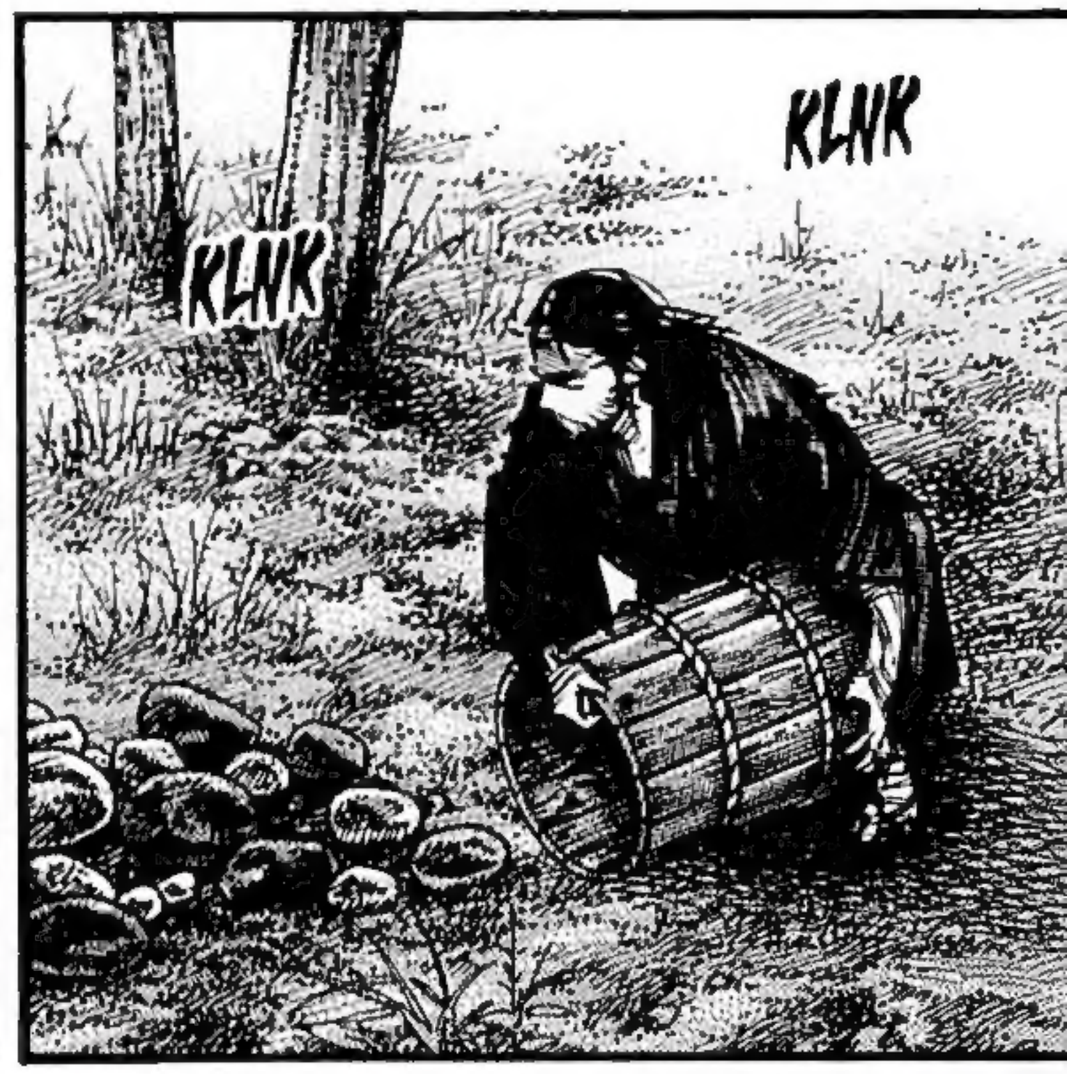
GO TO SLEEP.

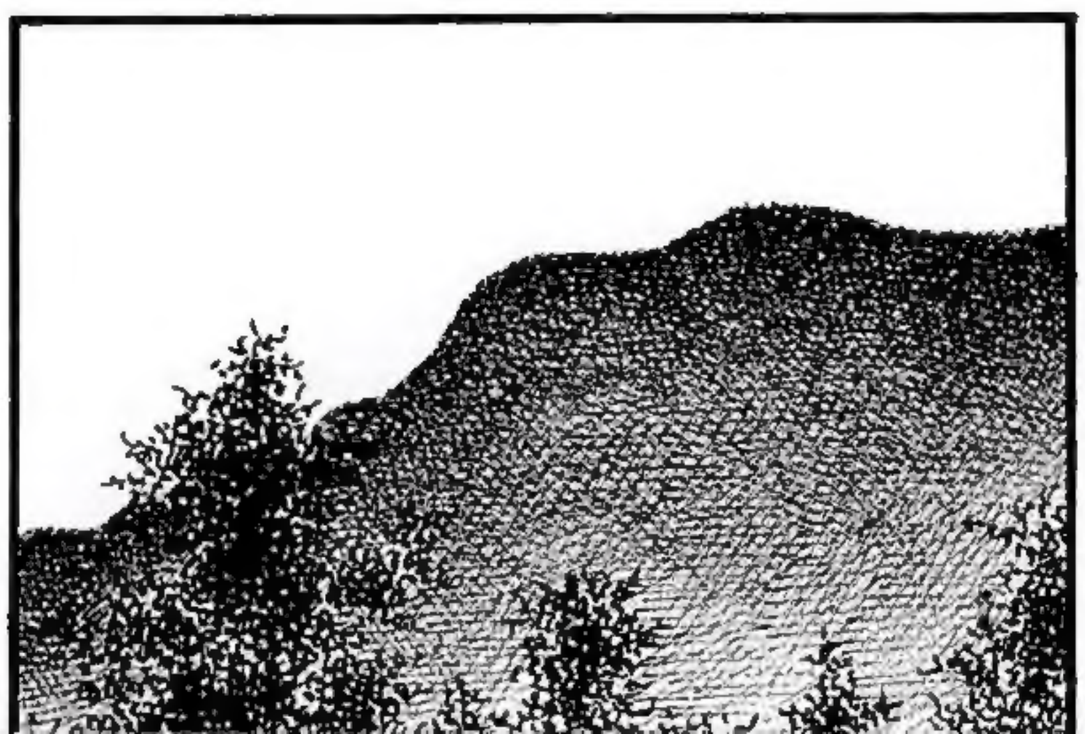
#304 | Overflow

KTUNK

KTINK

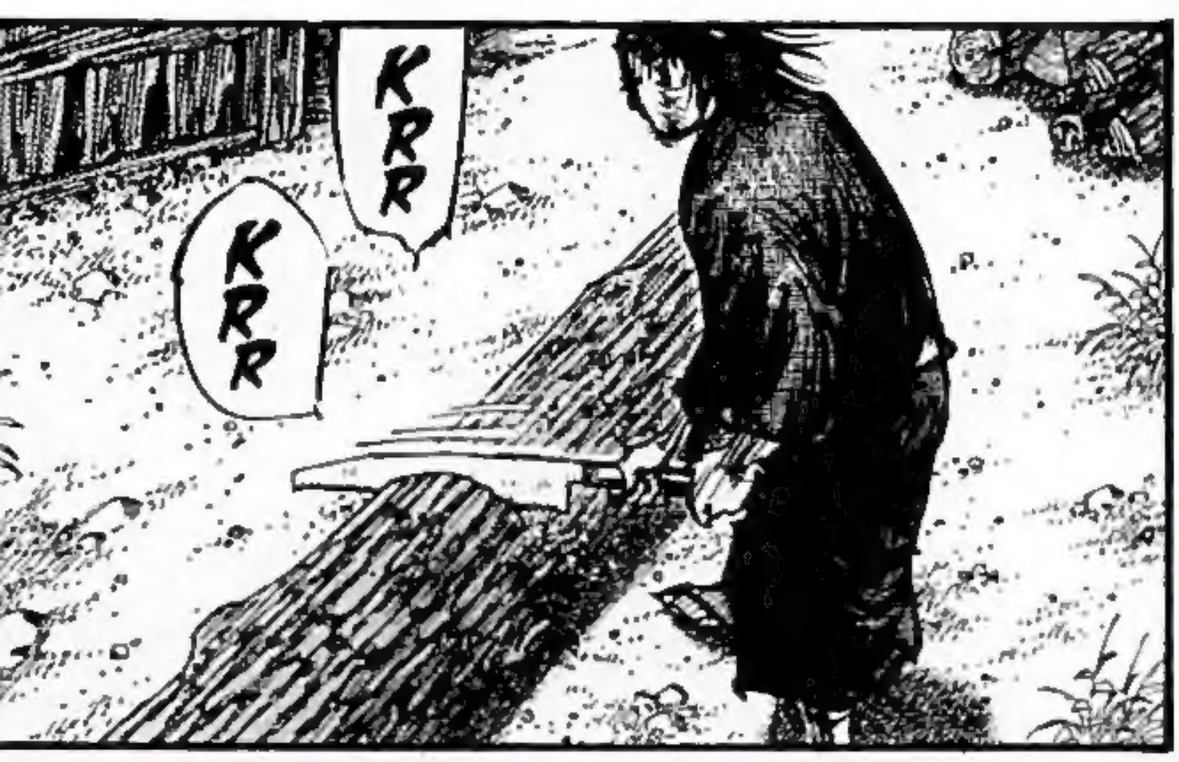

WHEW ...
THIS IS USELESS.


KLNK
KLNK

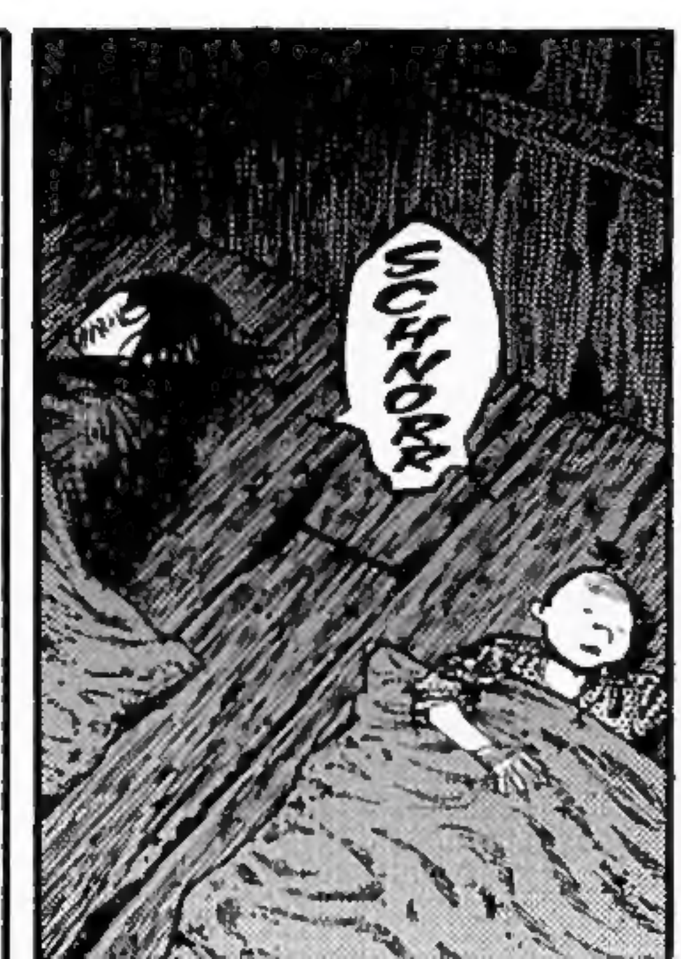


IORI, WE'RE GOING TO THE MOUNTAIN.

HUF
HUF
HUF


KRRR
KRRR

KLAK
THUNK

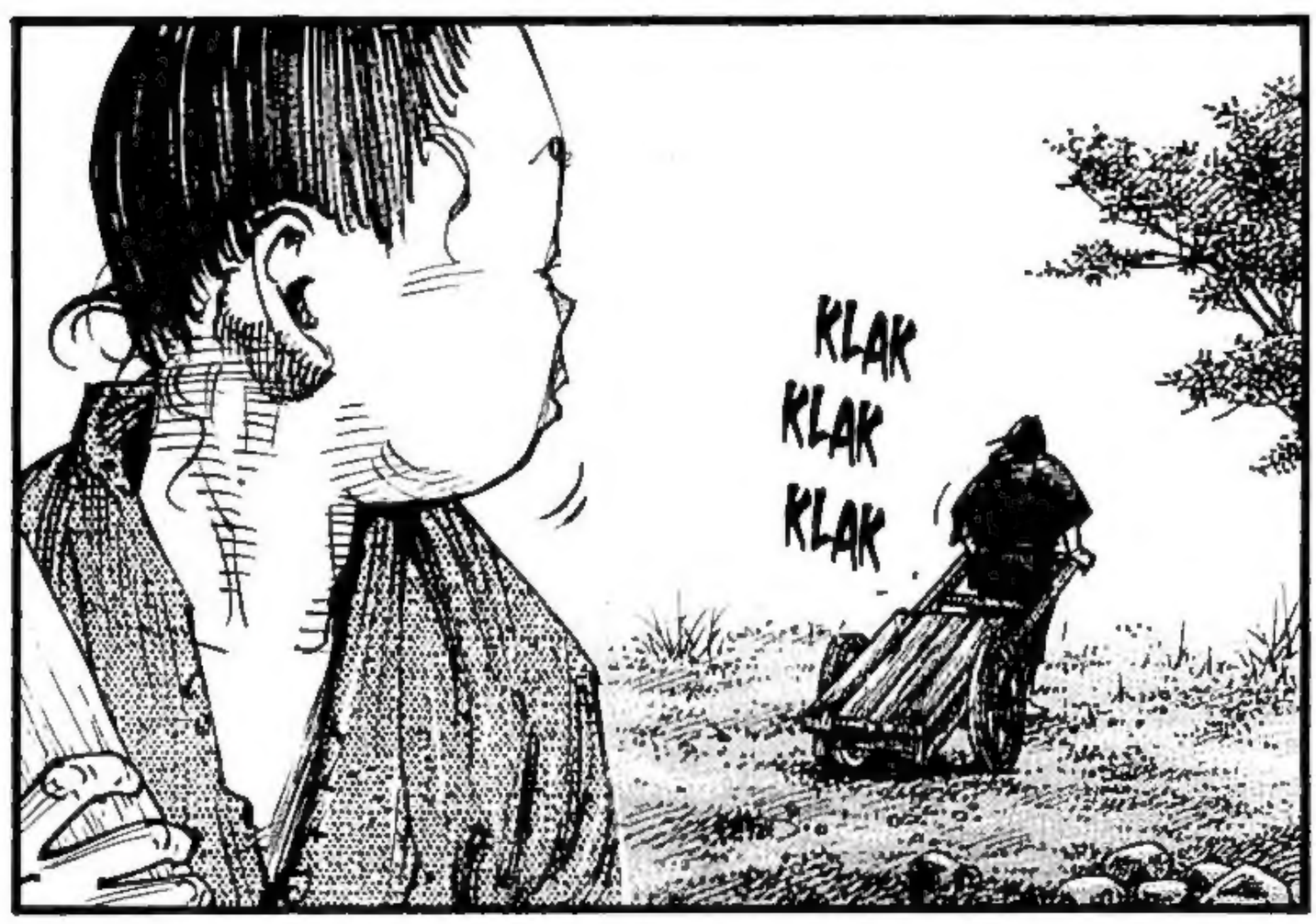

SCHNORR

KRRR
TUNK
TONK

SKILLFUL!

...

THIS SHOULD DO.


KLAK
KLAK
KLAK

FWICH

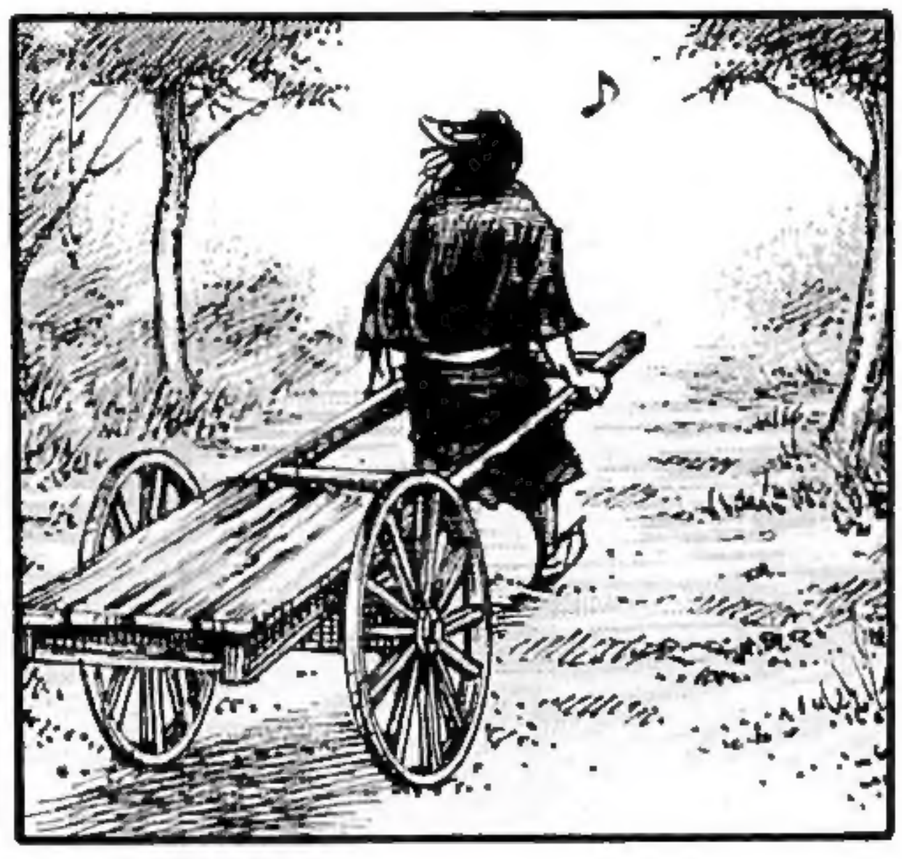
...

...

THUNK

...

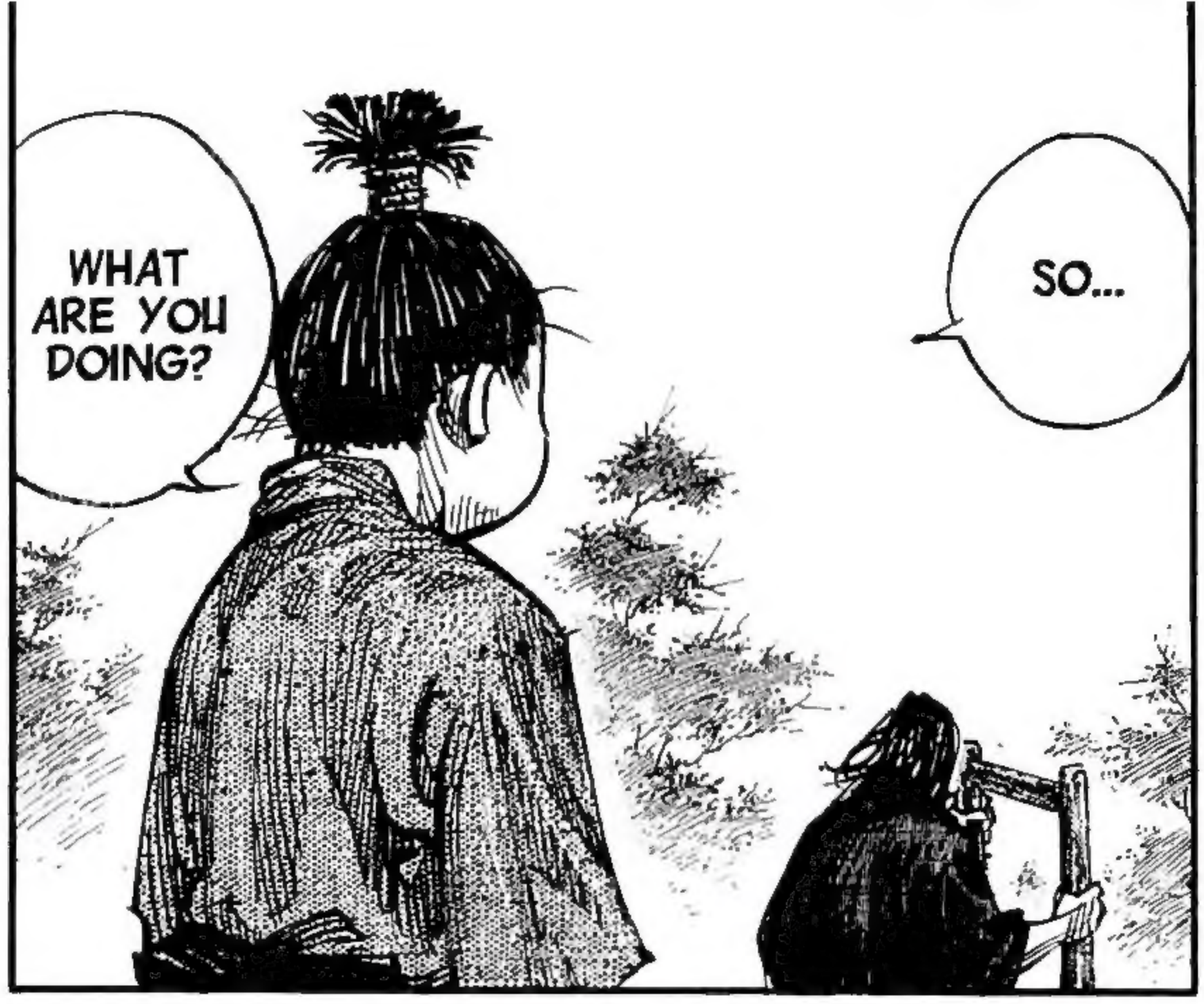
THUNK



KLAK

TUNK

TUNK


WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SO...

LISTEN...

HMM... CAN'T YOU TELL?

GOTTA GET TO WORK.
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

THE RIVER WILL OVERFLOW THROUGH HERE.
WE JUST NEED TO BLOCK THIS PART HERE.
WE'LL NEED MORE THAN JUST A PILE OF ROCKS THOUGH.

WELL, THAT'S... BECAUSE... YOU'VE BEEN LETTING ME STAY HERE... AND...

WHY AM I DOING THIS?

WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING?

...BE DOING THIS FOR ME?

WHY WOULD AN ERRANT SAMURAI...

HMPH...

NOT SUPPOSED TO DRAW IT ALL THE TIME.

YOU'RE NOT TRAINING AT ALL.

YOU PULLED OUT YOUR SWORD ONCE AND HAVEN'T TOUCHED IT SINCE.

IT'S FRUSTRATING, ISN'T IT?

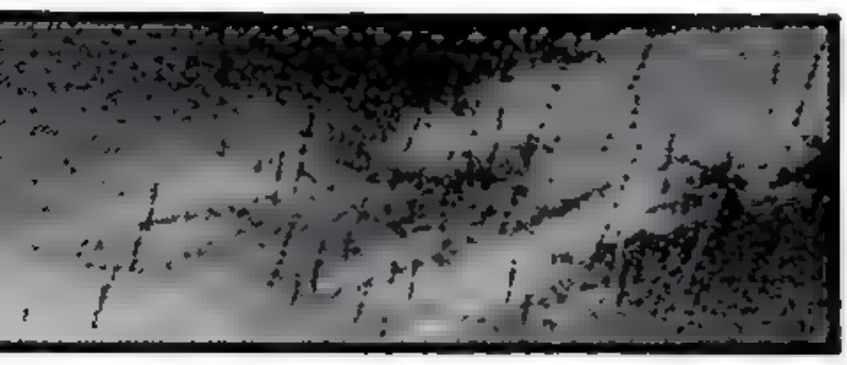
BESIDES, BEING TOYED WITH BY WATER...

IT'S RAINING AGAIN.

DON'T COME JUST YET.

OH, IT WON'T COME DOWN TOO HARD FOR A WHILE.

DON'T APOLOGIZE.
AND STOP TREATING ME LIKE A GUEST.



MNCH MNCH
SORRY.
WE ONLY HAVE DRIED POTATOES.

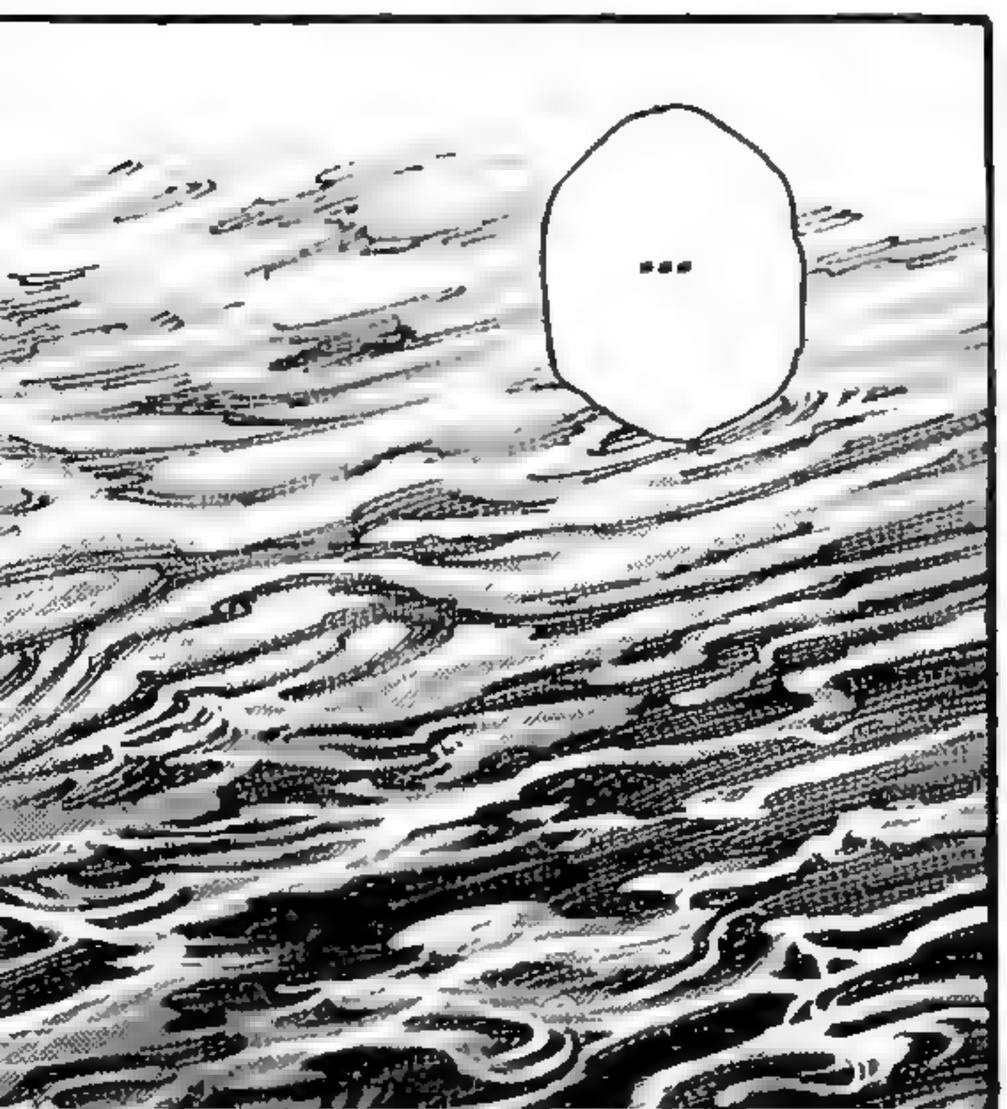
THIS TIME AROUND...
...WE'LL PROTECT THIS LAND.

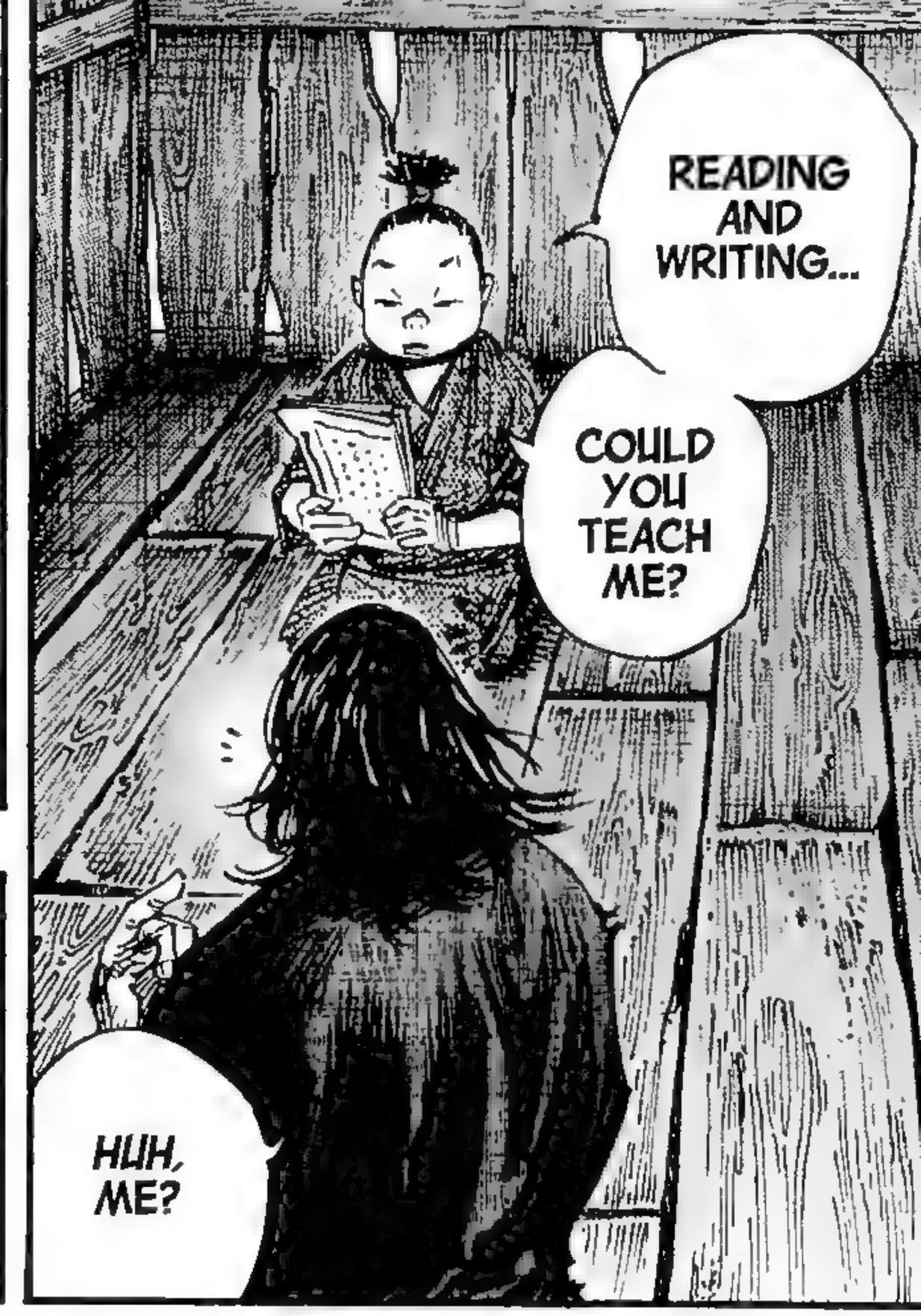
SOON WE'LL HAVE RICE, WHEAT AND DAIKON RADISHES.
THEN WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT EATING, IORI.

WE'LL DEFEAT THE WATER.

WE'LL BEAT IT!

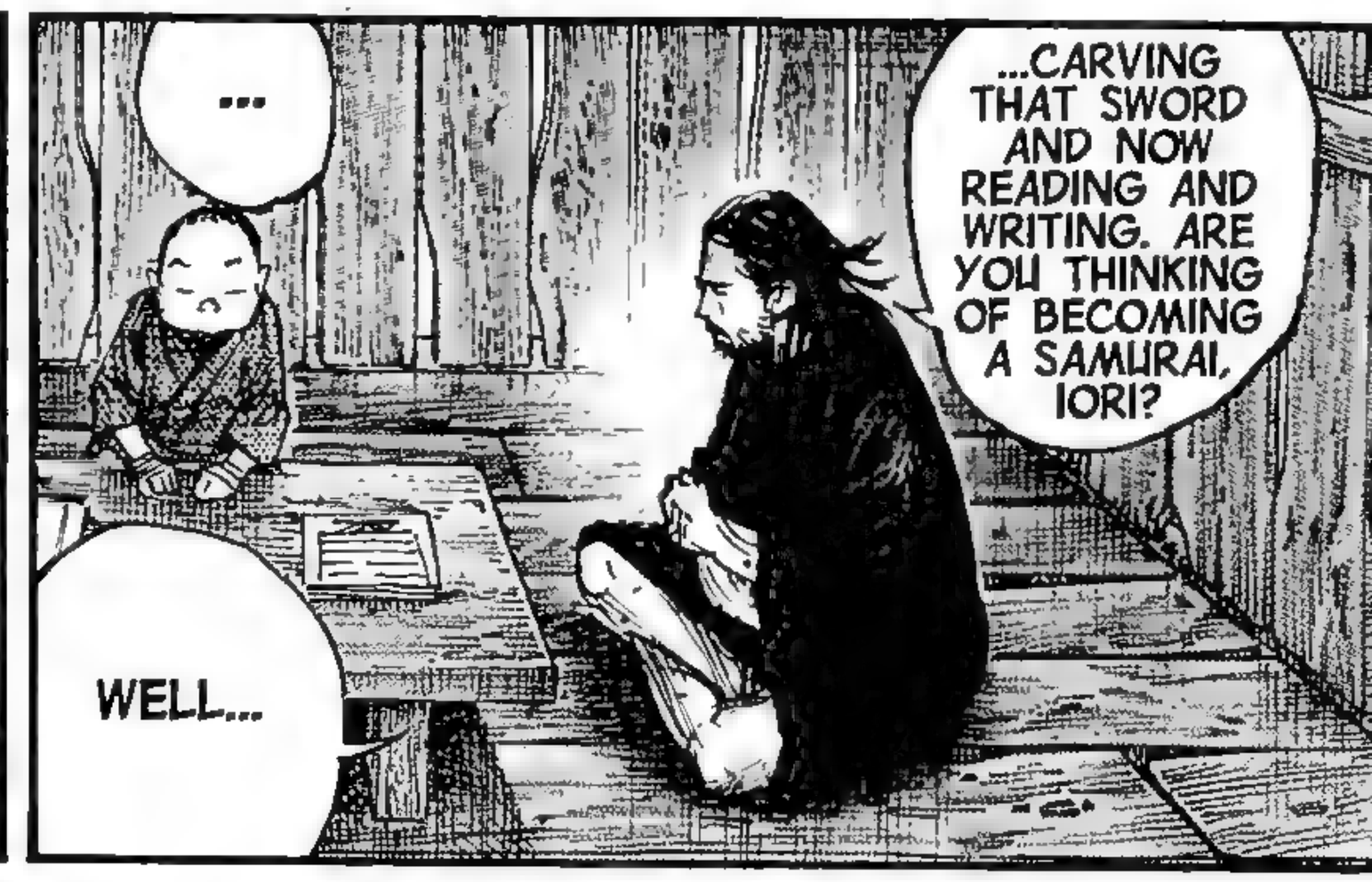
THAT SAMURAI'S BEEN STARING AT THE RIVER FOR A WHILE.

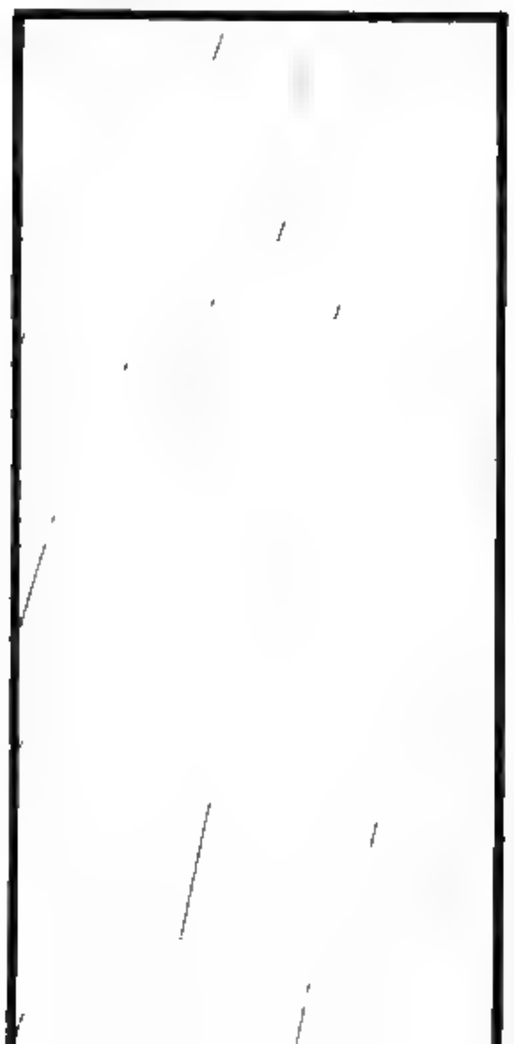



READING AND WRITING...
COULD YOU TEACH ME?
HUH, ME?

I'LL TEACH YOU WHAT I CAN, BUT...

SINCE YOUR FATHER SEEMED TO BE A SAMURAI...
WE DO HAVE SOME WRITTEN THINGS HERE.


...
...CARVING THAT SWORD AND NOW READING AND WRITING. ARE YOU THINKING OF BECOMING A SAMURAI, IORI?
WELL...

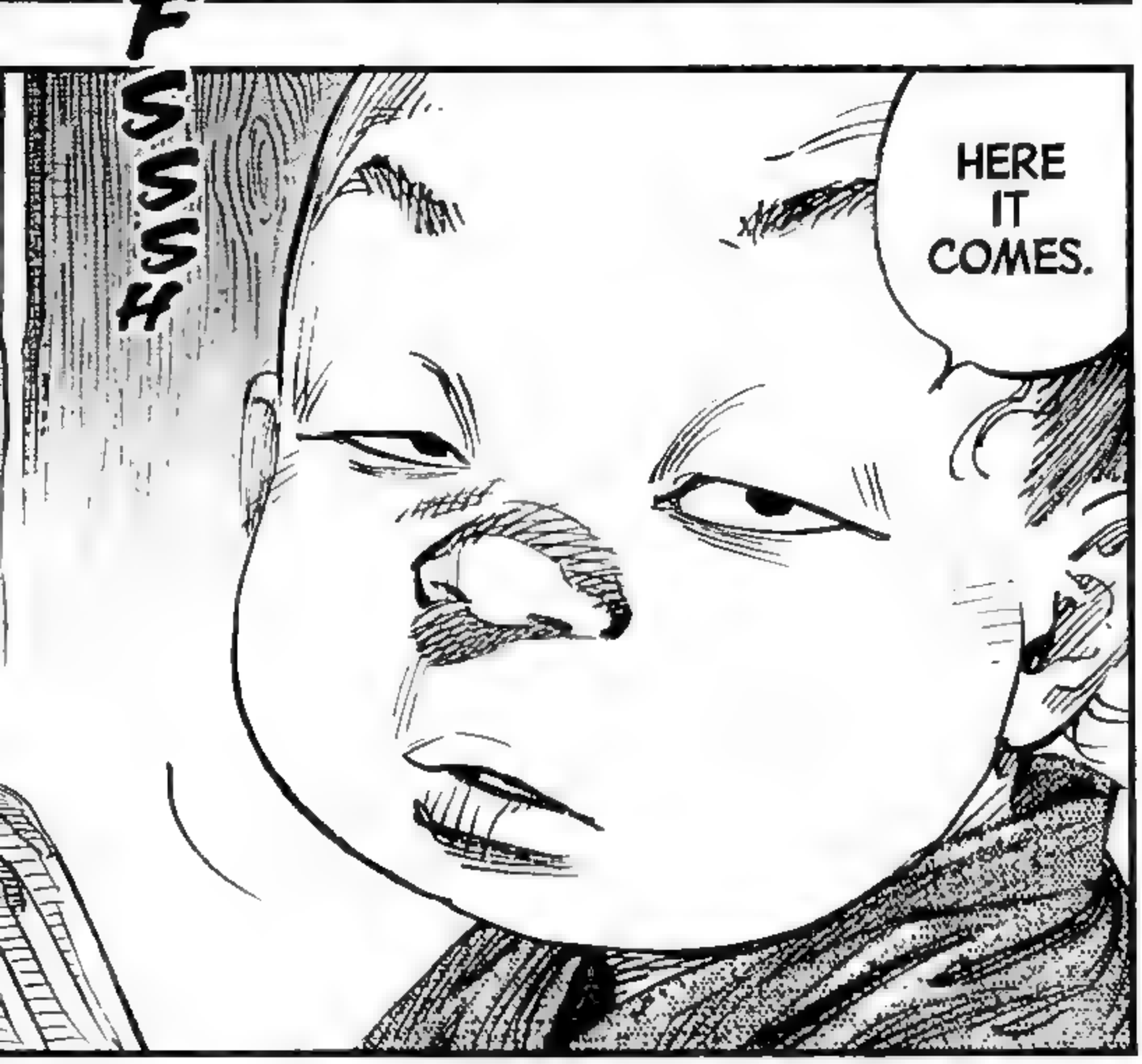


WHAT'S THIS SAY?

子曰
道千乘之國
：
敬事
而信
DIFFICULT CHARAC-TERS. HMM, LET'S SEE...

...
FSSSH

AND THEN...


FSSSH
HERE IT COMES.

FSSSH
SO IT'S HERE.

FSSSH
FSSSH

SEE.

WE WON!!

HA HA HA. WE BEAT YOU!!

GLUG

GLUG

GLUG

GLUG

...

HEY...
HUH

I KNOW A MAN...

...WHO WAS LIKE THIS WATER.

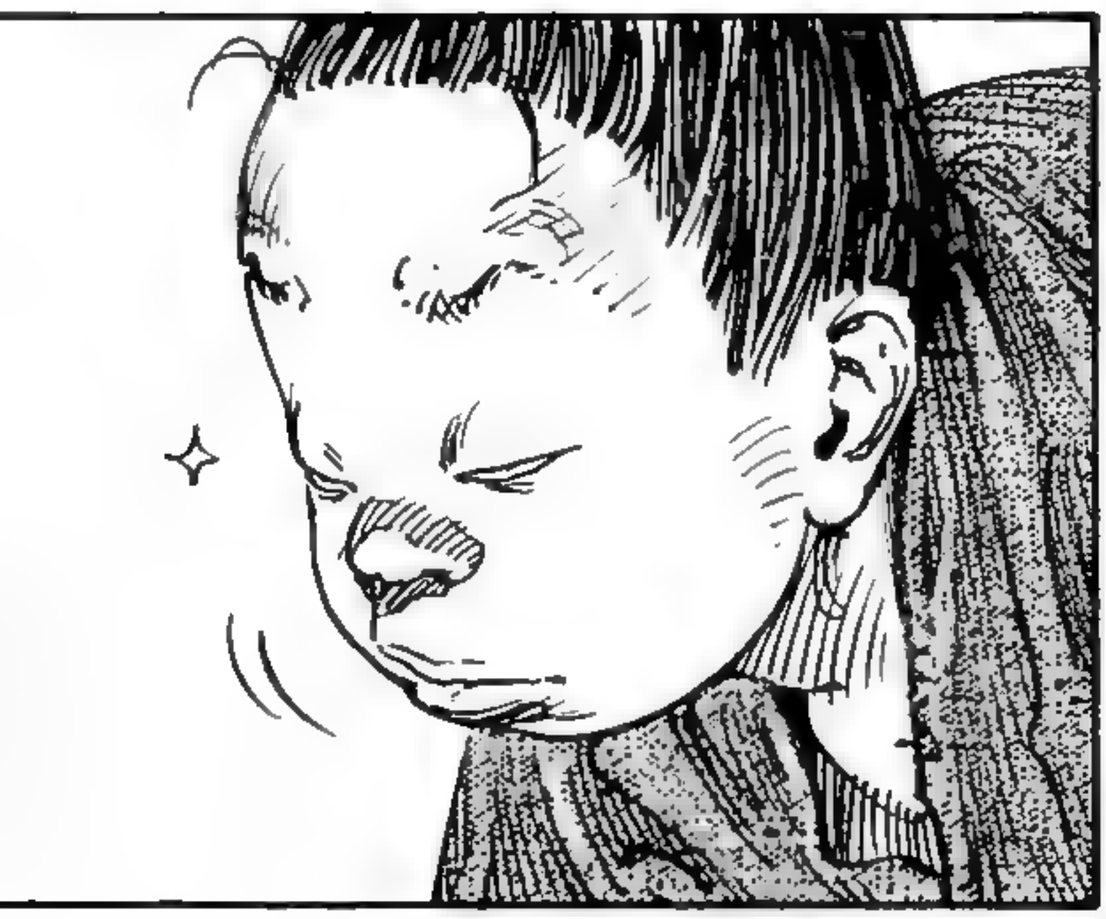
FREE AND BEYOND GRASP.

IF I FIGHT, I'LL LOSE.

...

BODY'S GETTING STIFF.

I'M BORED...
DEFEAT WATER. I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO DO THAT. AND IT JUST KEEPS ON RAINING...



LET'S WRESTLE.
...!

GRRR
WHUD
SAAAAAS
WHUDD
YAH
YOU'RE SO LIGHT.

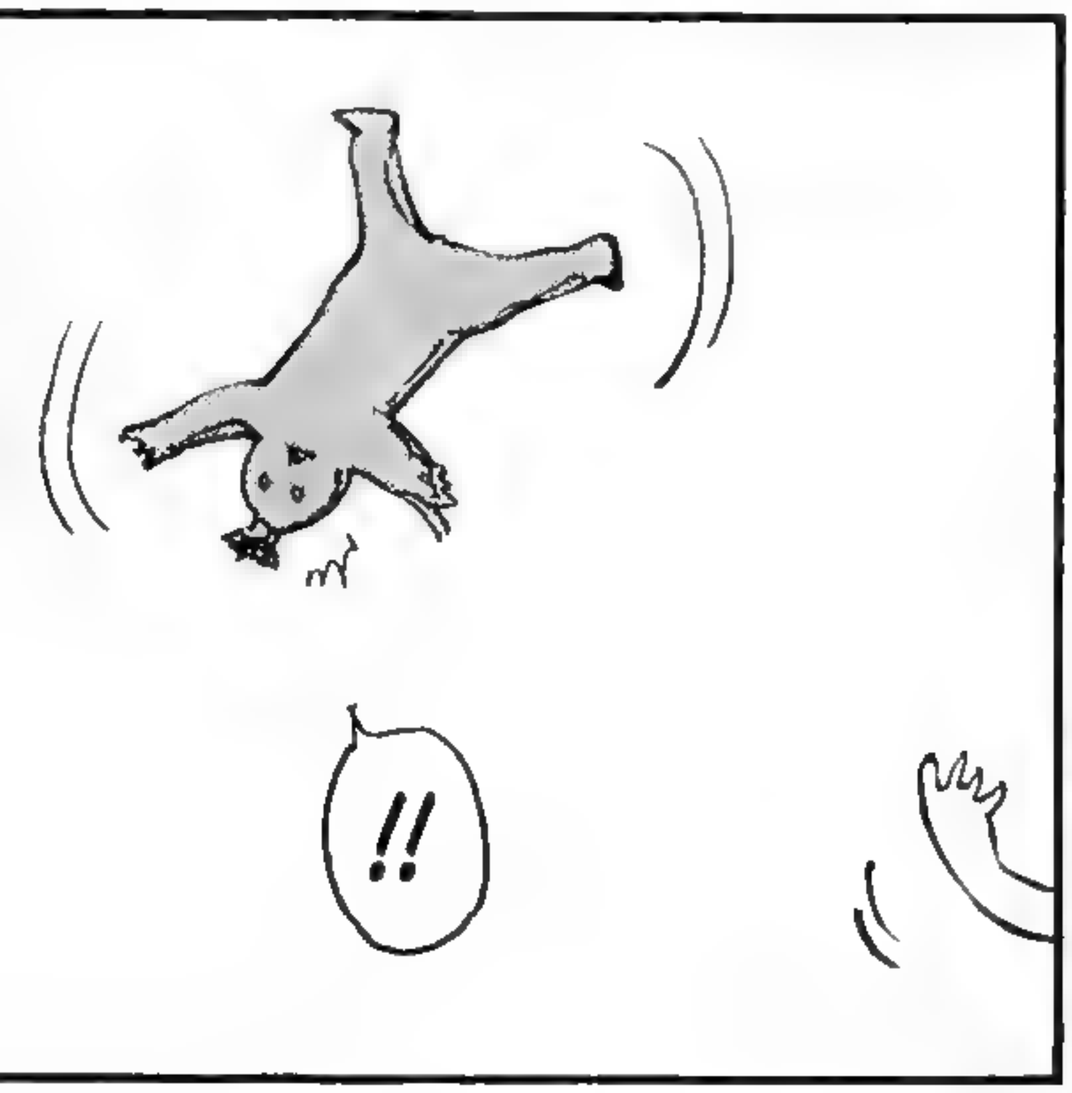
WAUMP

GRRR!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD YOURSELF BACK.

GRR!

I'LL GET YOUR LEGS!!


!!

UNGH

GRR!

LIGHT AS A FEATHER.

UNGH...

AH

SUBSTI-TUTE

SUBSTI-TUTE

DOES IT HURT?

NO, IT DOESN'T HURT.

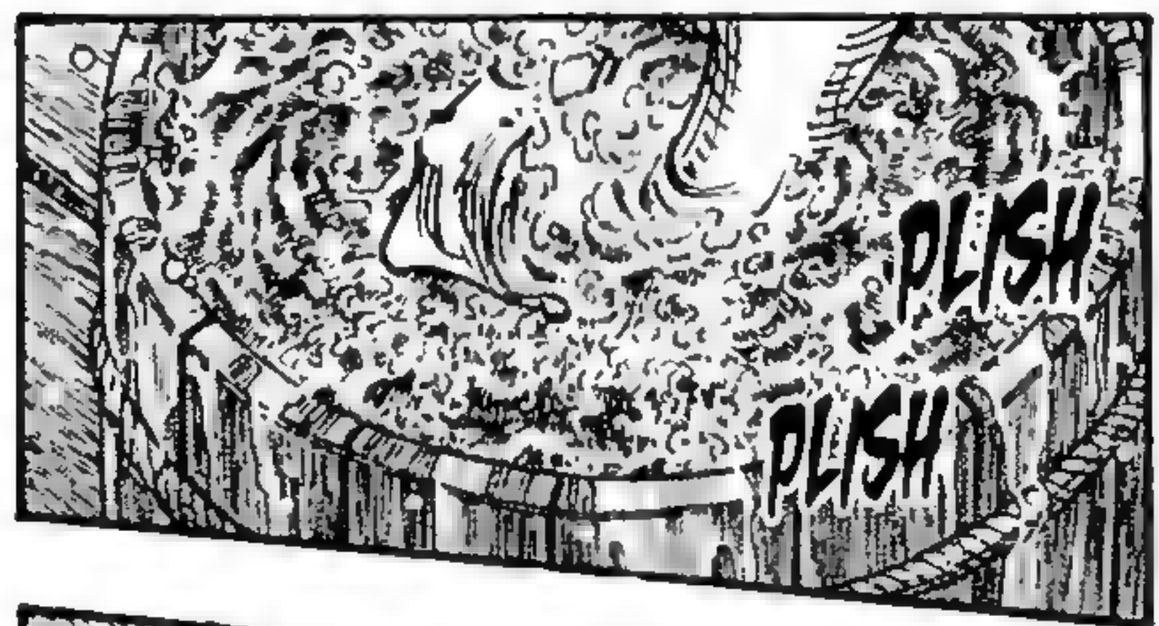
IT'S JUST ITCHY.

FROM ALL THAT WRESTLING?

THEY'RE FILTHY!
!!

I'M FINE.

?
SHOW ME YOUR FEET, IORI.


PLISH
PLISH

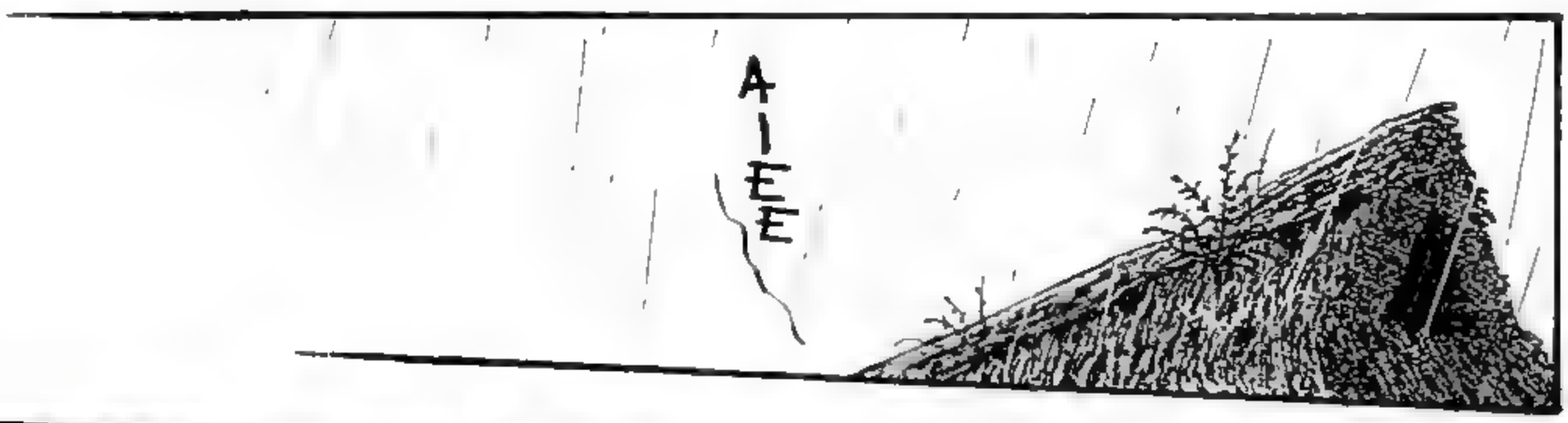
WOW...
YEARS OF GRIME.

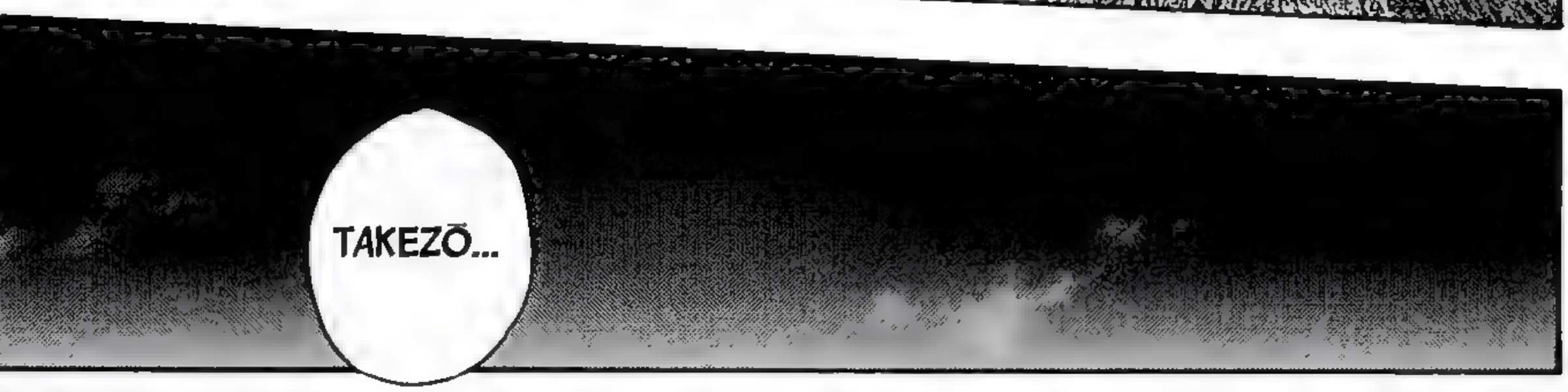
ARF!
I'M GOING TO WIPE THIS CRUD OFF.
YOU SMELL LIKE A DOG.
RUBB RUBB

NOW YOU'RE SPOTLESS.
HA HA...

...

DOES IT TICKLE?
YEAH.


AIEE


TAKEZŌ...

ZZZZZZ

TELL ME ABOUT THIS MAN WHO WAS LIKE WATER.

TELL ME ABOUT THIS MAN WHO WAS LIKE WATER.

FASTER THERE.
THE RIVERBED SHAPES THE FLOW.

SLOW HERE.

A WIDE RIVER.
A NARROW RIVER.

AND STEEP RIVERBED.

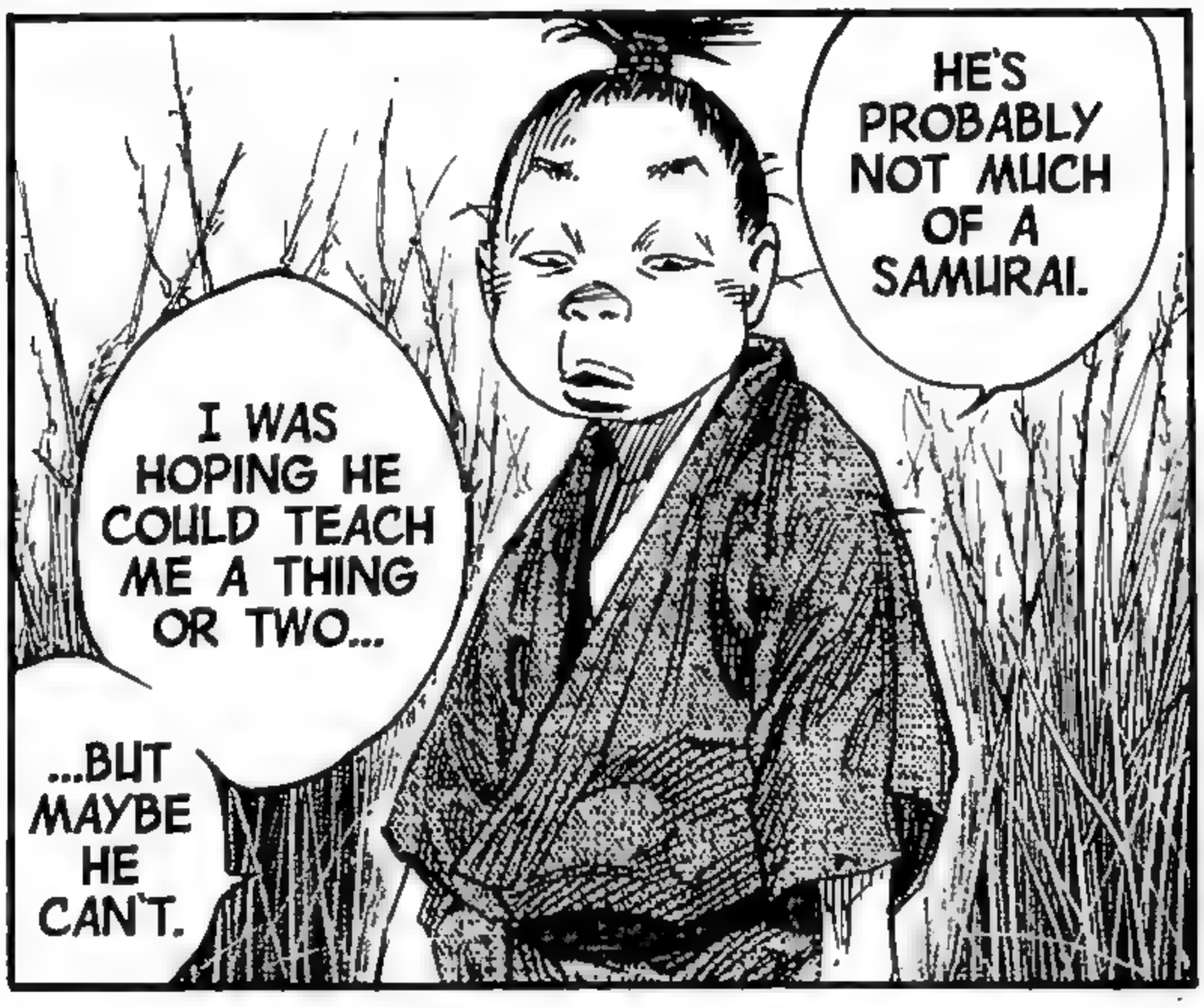
A SLOW RIVERBED.

WATER...

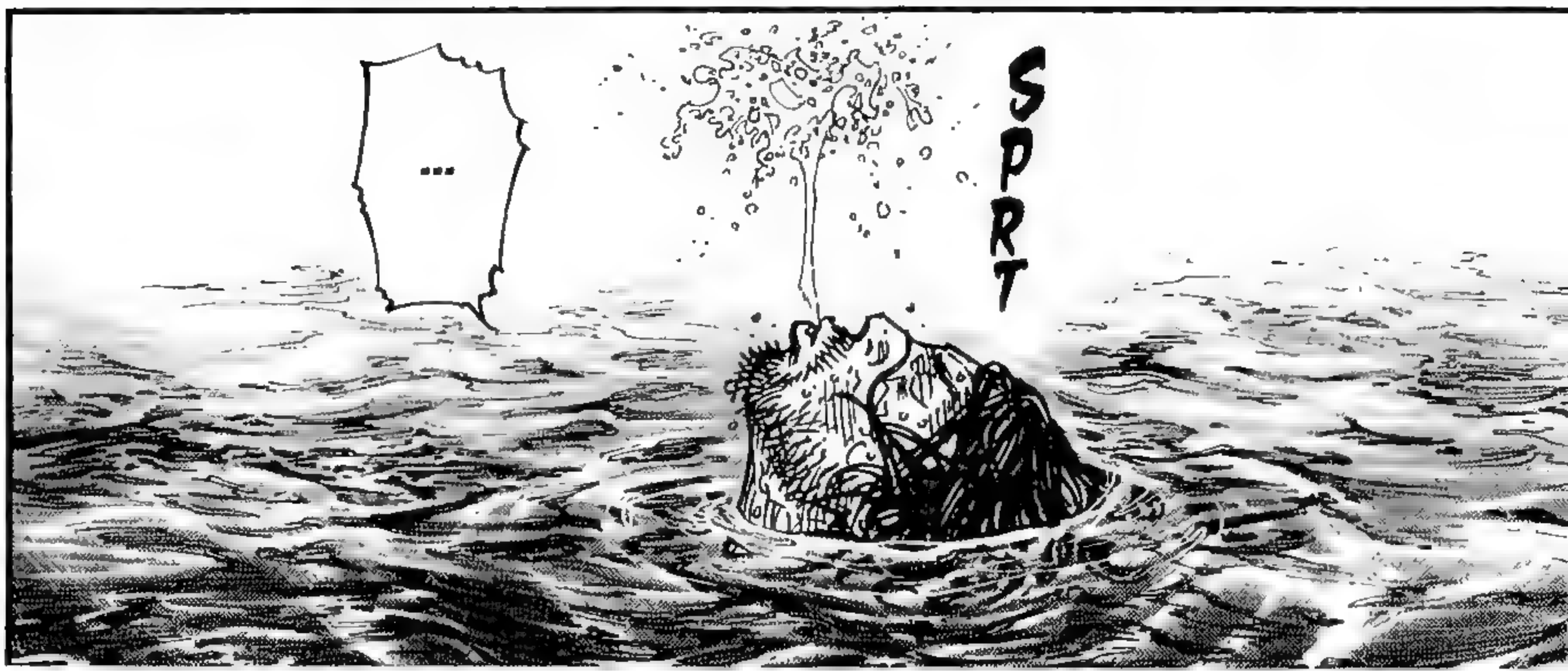
WHERE DOES ITS WATER FLOW...
ITS SLOWNESS.
ITS SPEED.
IT'S NOT UP TO THE WATER ITSELF.
THE WATER ONLY FOLLOWS...
...THE RIVERBED...

WHUD
...AND BECAUSE IT IS SO...
...THAT'S THE REASON WE ARE SO COMPLETELY FREE.
...AND THE WIND...
...AND OTHER FORCES.
COMPLETELY DRIVEN BY EXTERNAL FORCES.
AND BY YIELDING ITSELF...
...SO COMPLETELY...

PL OO SH
!!


HE'S PROBABLY NOT MUCH OF A SAMURAI.
I WAS HOPING HE COULD TEACH ME A THING OR TWO...
...BUT MAYBE HE CAN'T.

THERE'S A LIMIT TO HOW MUCH YOU LEAVE YOURSELF OPEN.
THAT'S JUST TOO MUCH.

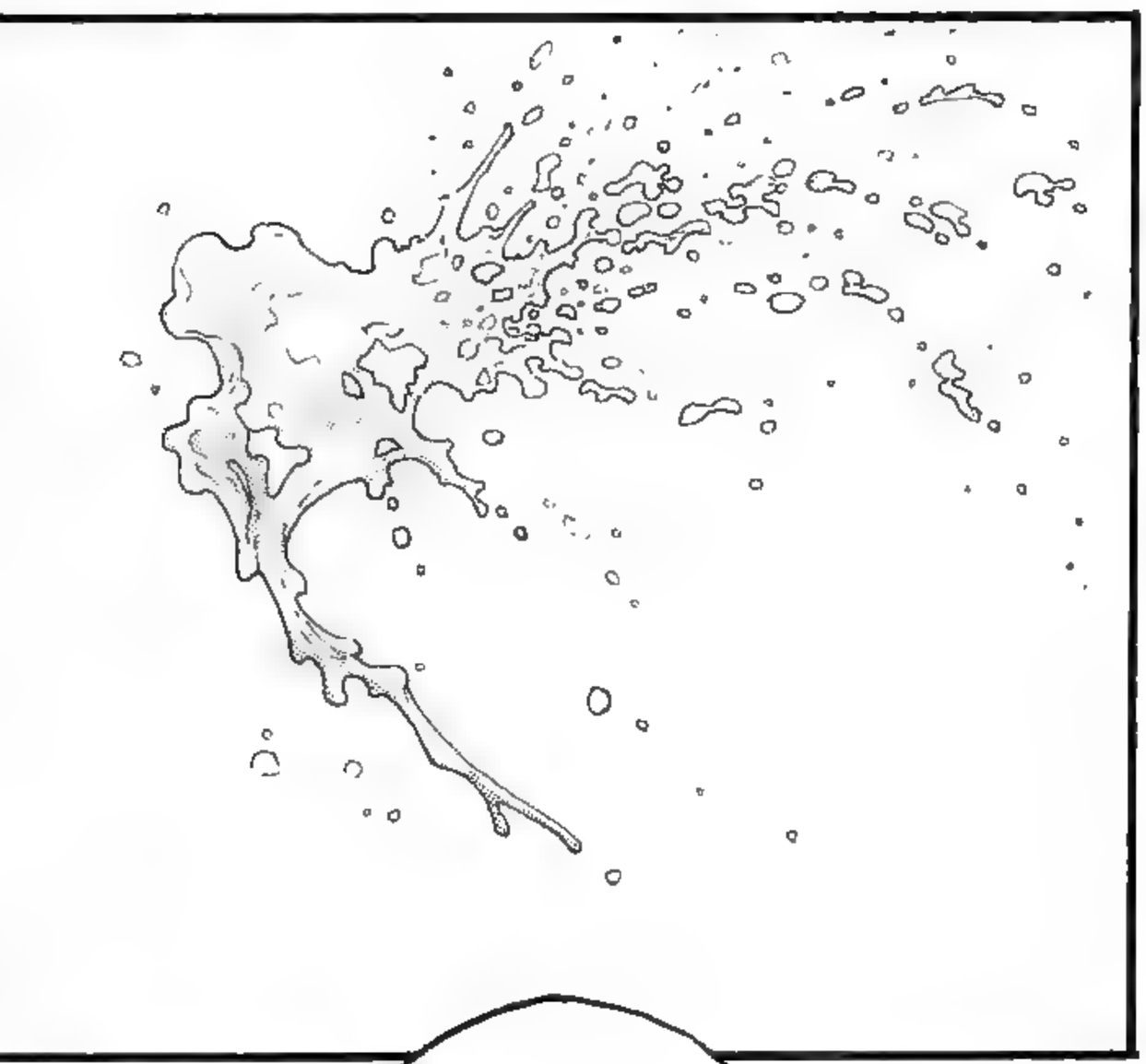

...
SPRT

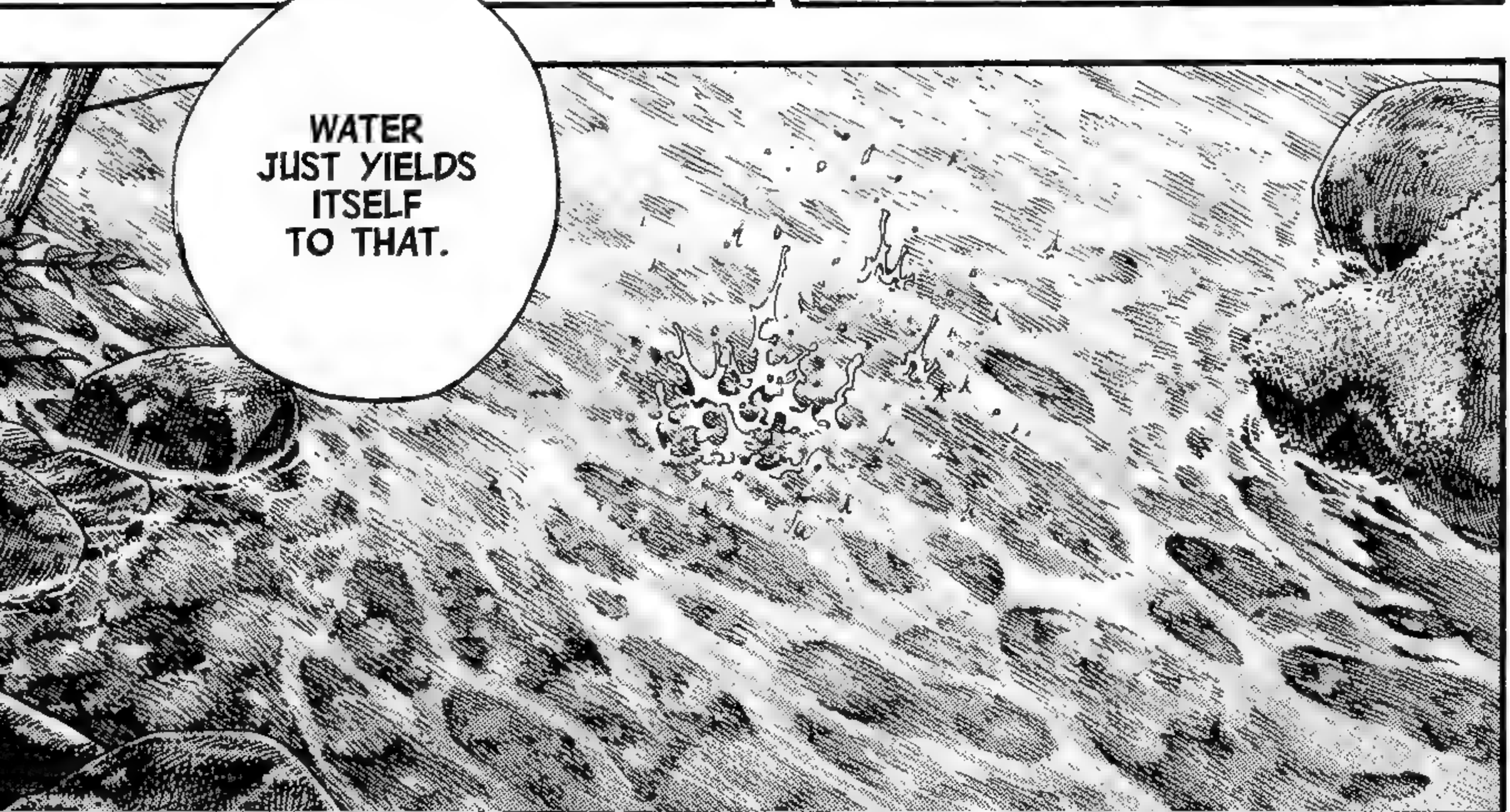
STUDYING...
FOR MY FUTURE.

#305 The Path of Water

RUSHING WATER...
NARROW STREAM.
FAST, PIERCING.

...IS COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL FORCES.
...THE FLOW OF WATER...
DEPENDING ON TERRAIN...




WATER JUST YIELDS ITSELF TO THAT.

PLISH

PLISH

EXTERNAL FORCES...

PLISH

...DETERMINES ITS SHAPE...

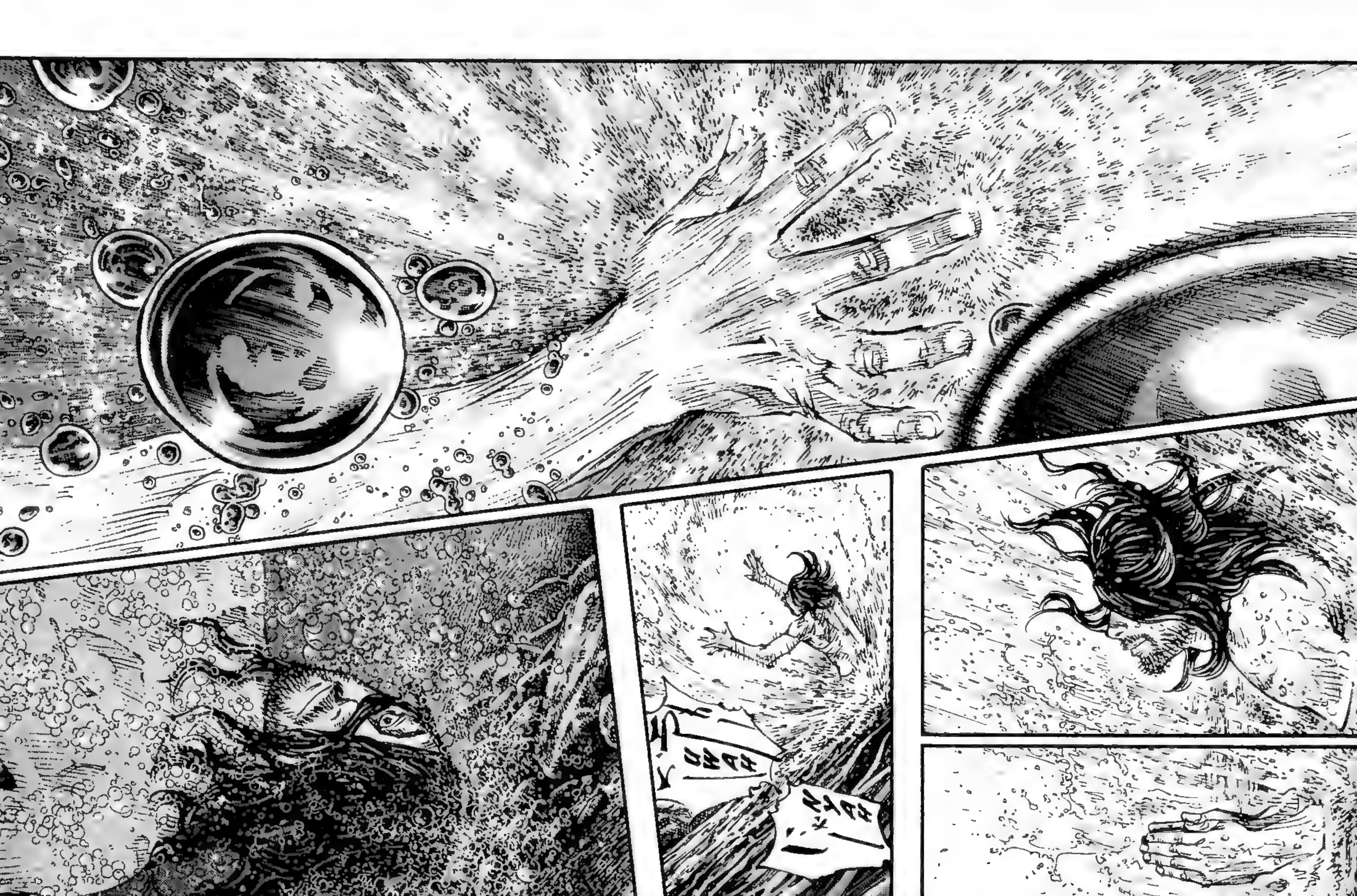
BUT WATER IS STILL JUST WATER.

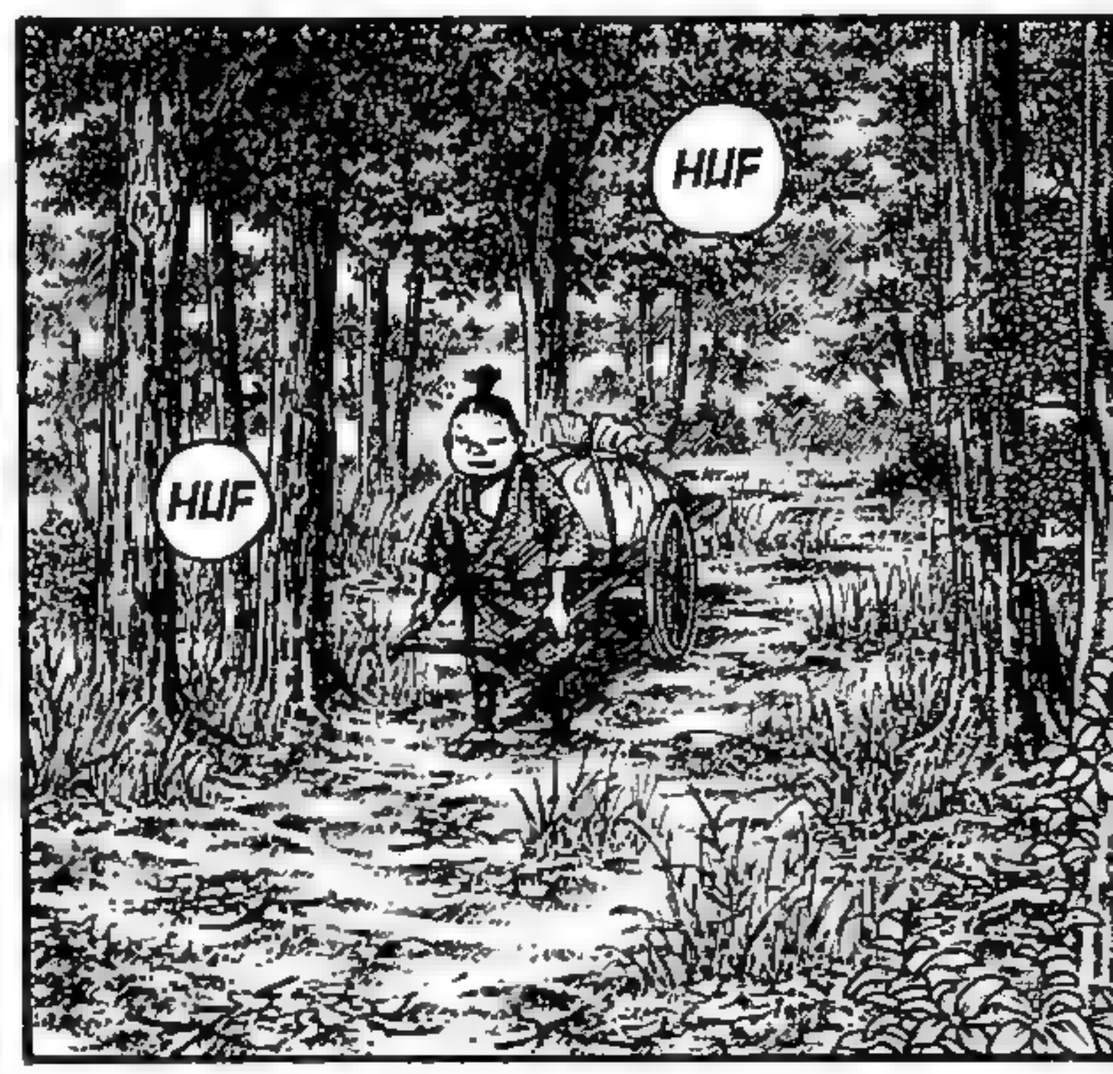
IT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN WATER.

COMPLETELY FREE...

TAKUAN
...

IS THIS WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?



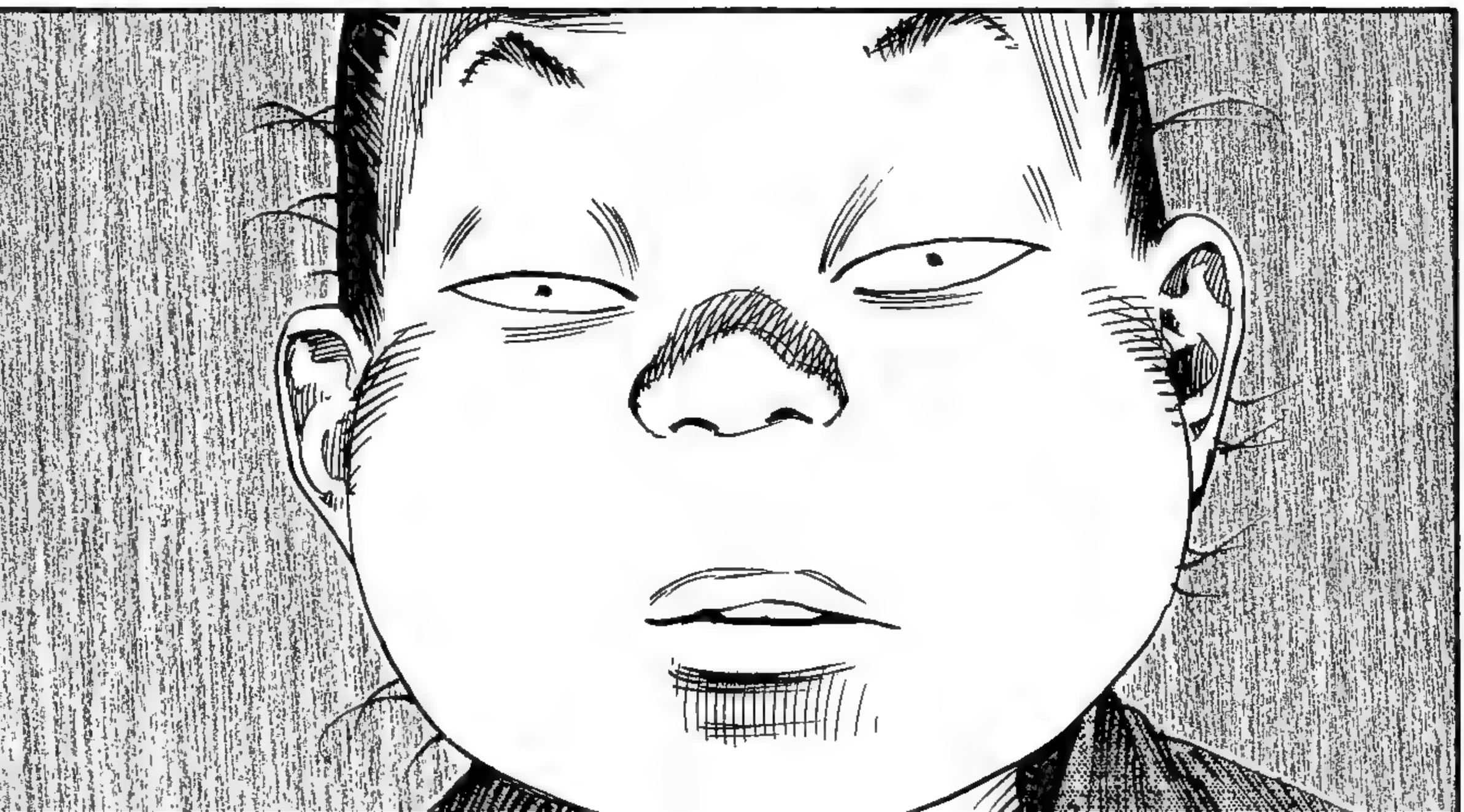

HUF
HUF

....!

WHAT'S THAT, IORI?
SHOW US!

?

WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THIS FOOD?!



ARRGH!

OUCH OUCH!
LET GO.
LET GO!

FWAK
YOU LITTLE--

GRANDPA LEFT ME HIS POUCH AND TOLD ME...

I SHOULDN'T HAVE HIT YOU.
BUT YOU WOULDN'T LET GO.
ARE YOU OKAY?

SORRY.
HIK HIK

SORRY. I DIDN'T REALIZE...

...THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME VALUABLE THINGS IN IT.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS INSIDE, BUT GIVEN HOW MUCH THEY GAVE ME...

...THAT IF I WAS EVER IN NEED, TO TAKE IT TO THE TEMPLE WHERE THEY'D EXCHANGE IT FOR FOOD.

BUT...

I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU HITTING ME.

HERE, USE THIS.

WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT YOU'D HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THAT OLD SHACK.

APOLOGIZE FOR INSULTING THAT NAME!

MY GRAND-FATHER MISAWA IORI WAS A SAMURAI, AND I INHERITED HIS NAME.

YOU ACCUSED ME OF BEING A THIEF...

...

I'M SORRY.
SORRY.

...
THAT CHILD ...

NO, YOU DO IT.
TELL HIM.

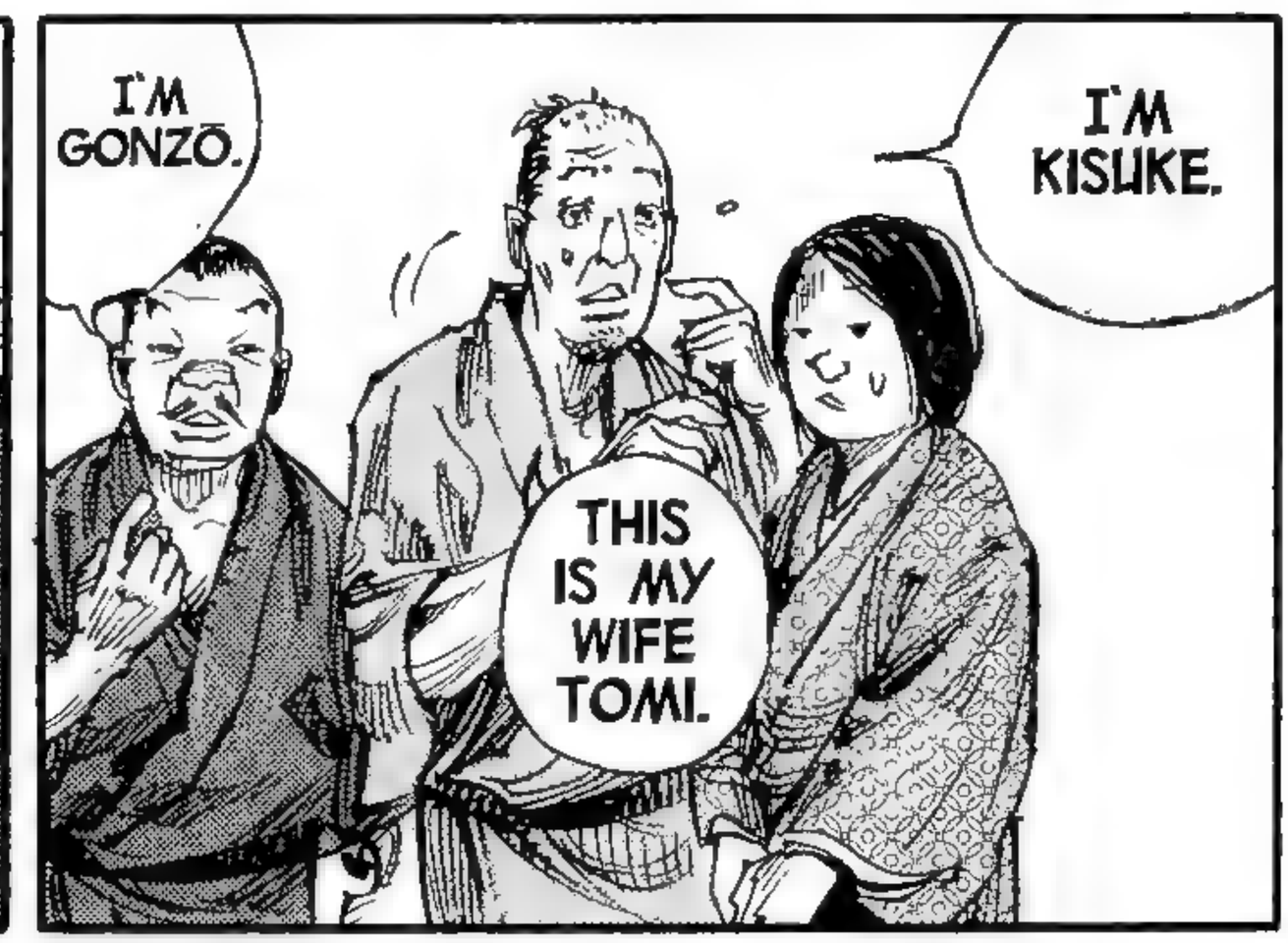
IORI...
?

?

URGH

W-WHAT...
...ARE YOUR PLANS...
...FOR THAT...
...CHILD?
WHAT IS IT?

WOM
I'M TORA.
WOM
I'M MIYOSHI.
I'M KYŪBE.


I'M GONZŌ.
I'M KISUKE.
THIS IS MY WIFE TOMI.

SEI.
I'M GENTA.
?
SO EVERY-ONE'S COME HERE.

...
...THIS IS THE ENTIRE VILLAGE.
ASIDE FROM OUR WIVES AND KIDS...
HE PUT ON AIRS OF BEING A SAMURAI WHEN HE WAS JUST A FARMER.
THE BOY'S FATHER ...
TREND?
HE WAS A STRANGE ONE.
...TAKEZŌ.
AHEM ...
I'M MIYA-MOTO...
ARE YOU PLANNING ON TAKING THAT FARMER'S KID WITH YOU?
YOU'RE FOLLOWING THAT TREND OF BECOMING AN ERRANT SAMURAI, RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT.

HE WAS NO GOOD AT IT.

A SAD SIGHT IT WAS.

SOMETIMES HE'D PULL OUT A SWORD...

WE WANTED TO HELP HIM OUT, BUT...

HE HAS NO ONE.

BUT NOW HE HAS NO FATHER.

WE LEFT THEM ALONE.

LISTEN...

...

OOPS

...THEN SOME STRANGE SAMURAI CAME AND...

PLEASE DON'T FORGET THAT, TAKEZŌ.

WE'RE NOT YOUR ENEMY.

...!!

...WATER?
DEFEAT ...

BUT THAT'S JUST HOW THINGS ARE HERE WHERE WE LIVE.
IT FLOODS HERE EVERY YEAR.
OUR HARD WORK GETS SWEPT AWAY.

WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO DEFEAT THE WATER?
?

NOT LEAVING UNTIL I DO.

I'M GOING TO DEFEAT THE WATER.

SO YOU JUST GIVE UP?

WE'RE ALL AT THE MERCY OF GOD.

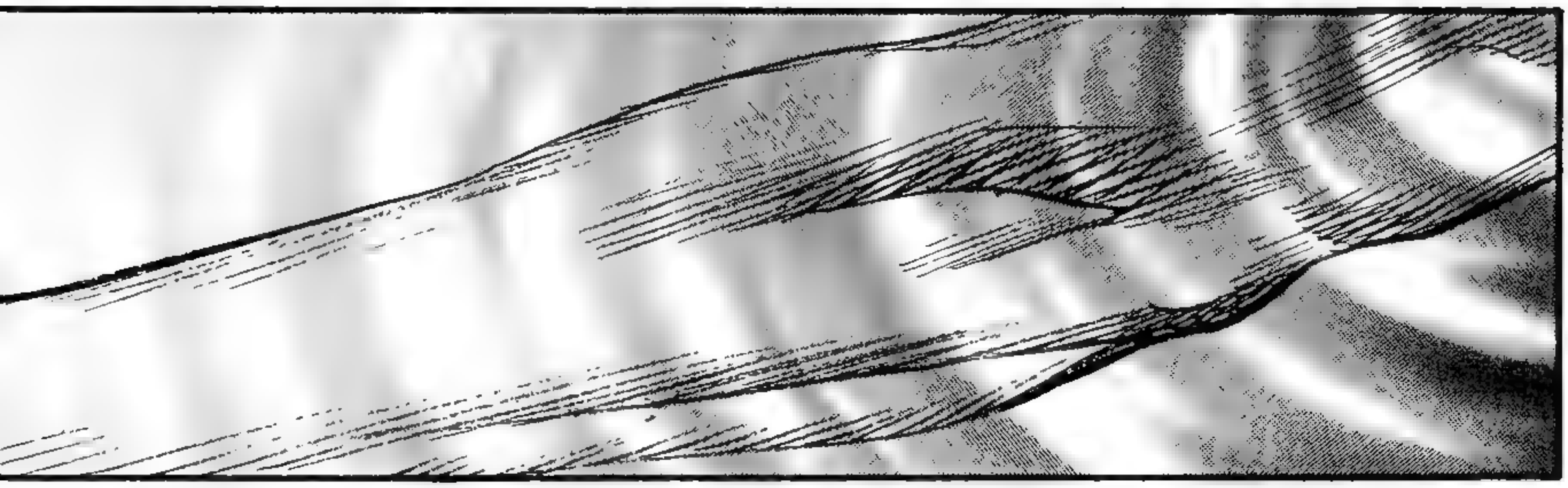
YOU DON'T GET IT.

...

NO ONE CAN LIVE FIGHTING AGAINST THE HEAVENS.

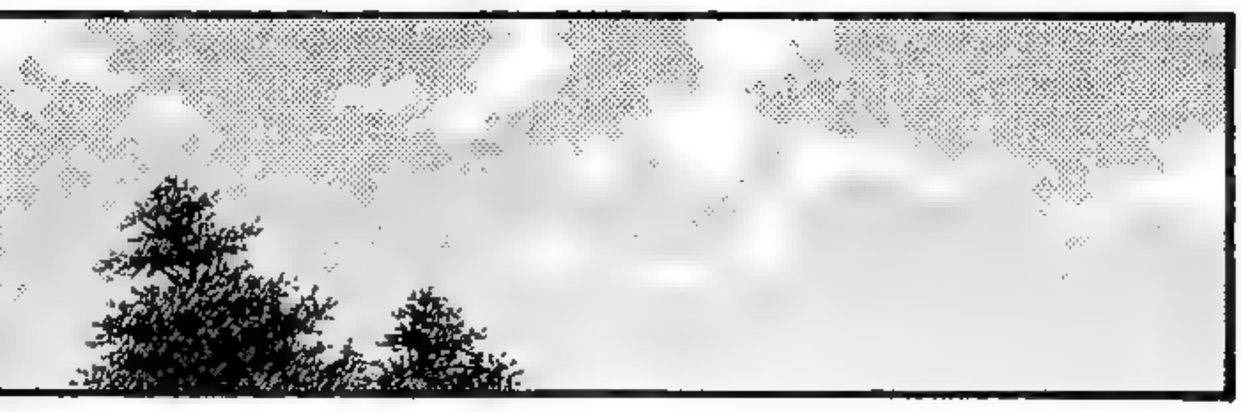
...
HEH HEH.
WE'LL MANAGE FOR A WHILE WITH THIS.
PLIP

FP

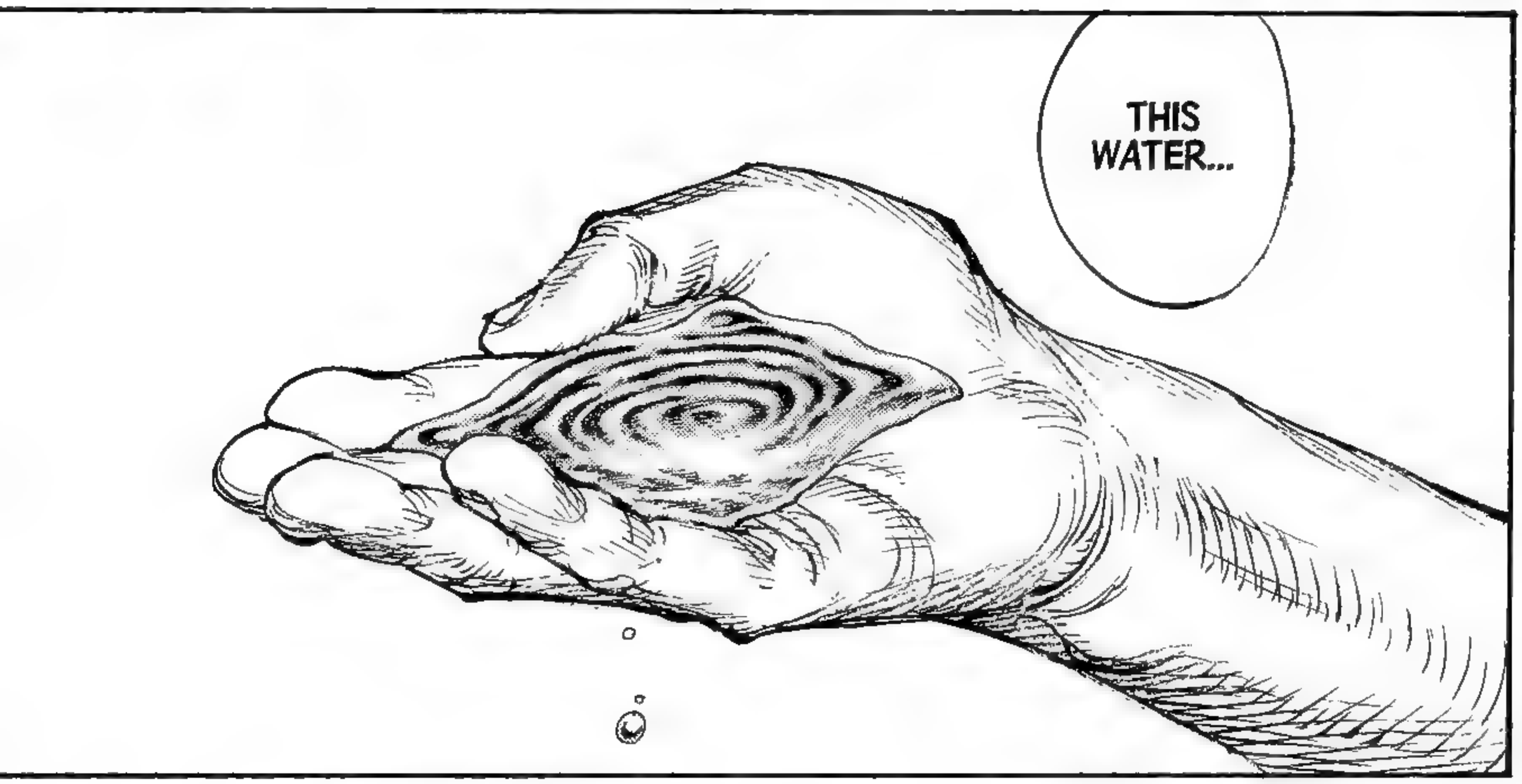


WATER DOESN'T OVERTAKE ITSELF.

IT HAS
NO NEED
TO RUSH.



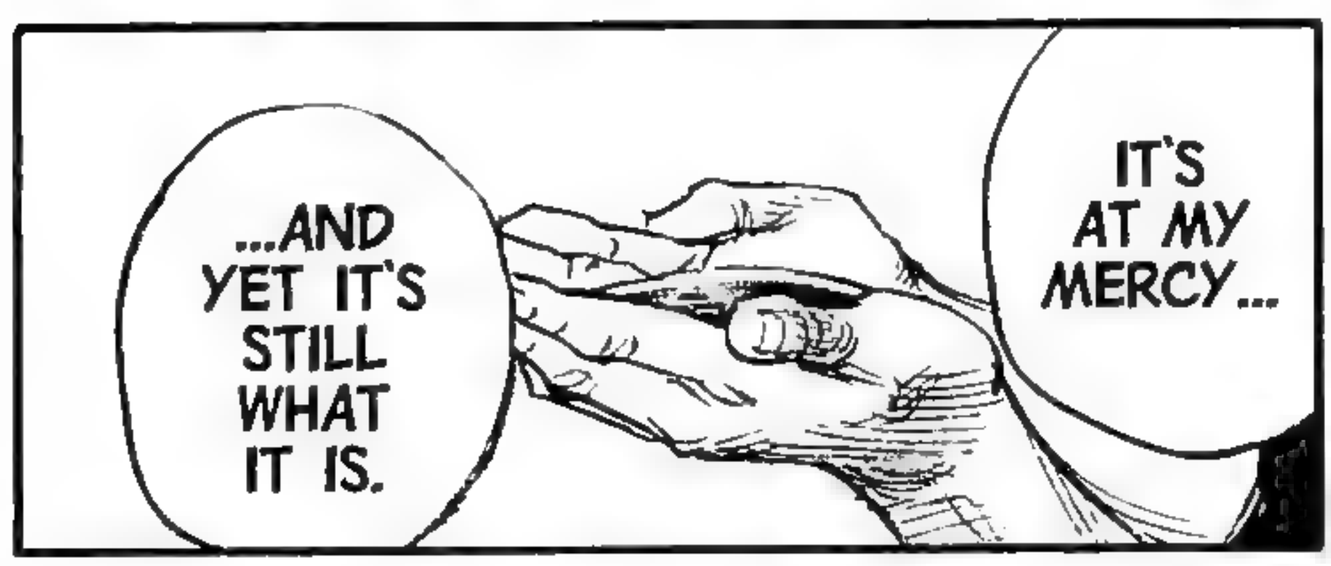
...!!


THIS WATER...

...COMPARE THEM.
THERE'S NO WAY TO...

...AND THIS WATER...

WATER COULD CARE LESS.
DEFEAT WATER...?


...AND YET IT'S STILL WHAT IT IS.
IT'S AT MY MERCY...

I CAN EASILY GRAB A HANDFUL...

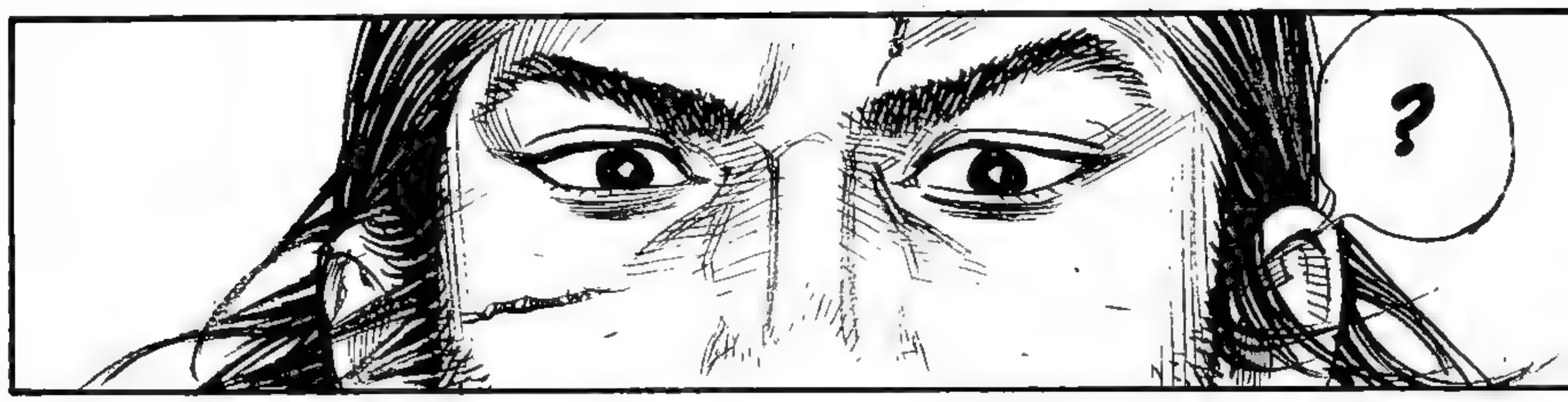
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
WIN-NING...

FREE...

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU ARRIVED AT THAT QUESTION?

YOU SPIN...

...AROUND AND AROUND.

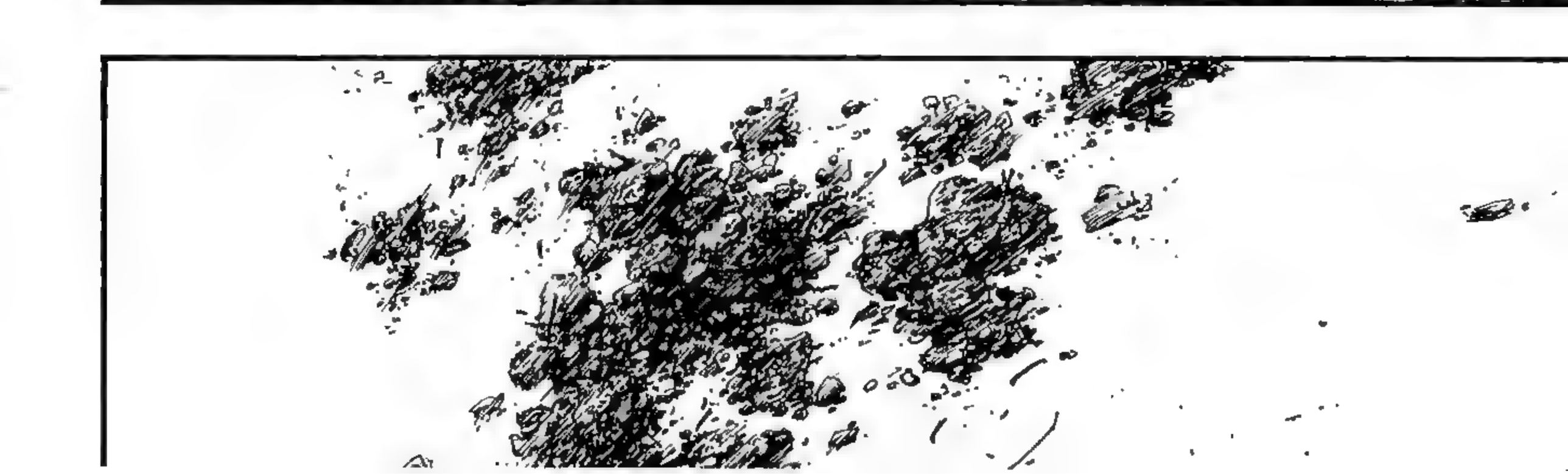


I ALREADY KNOW.

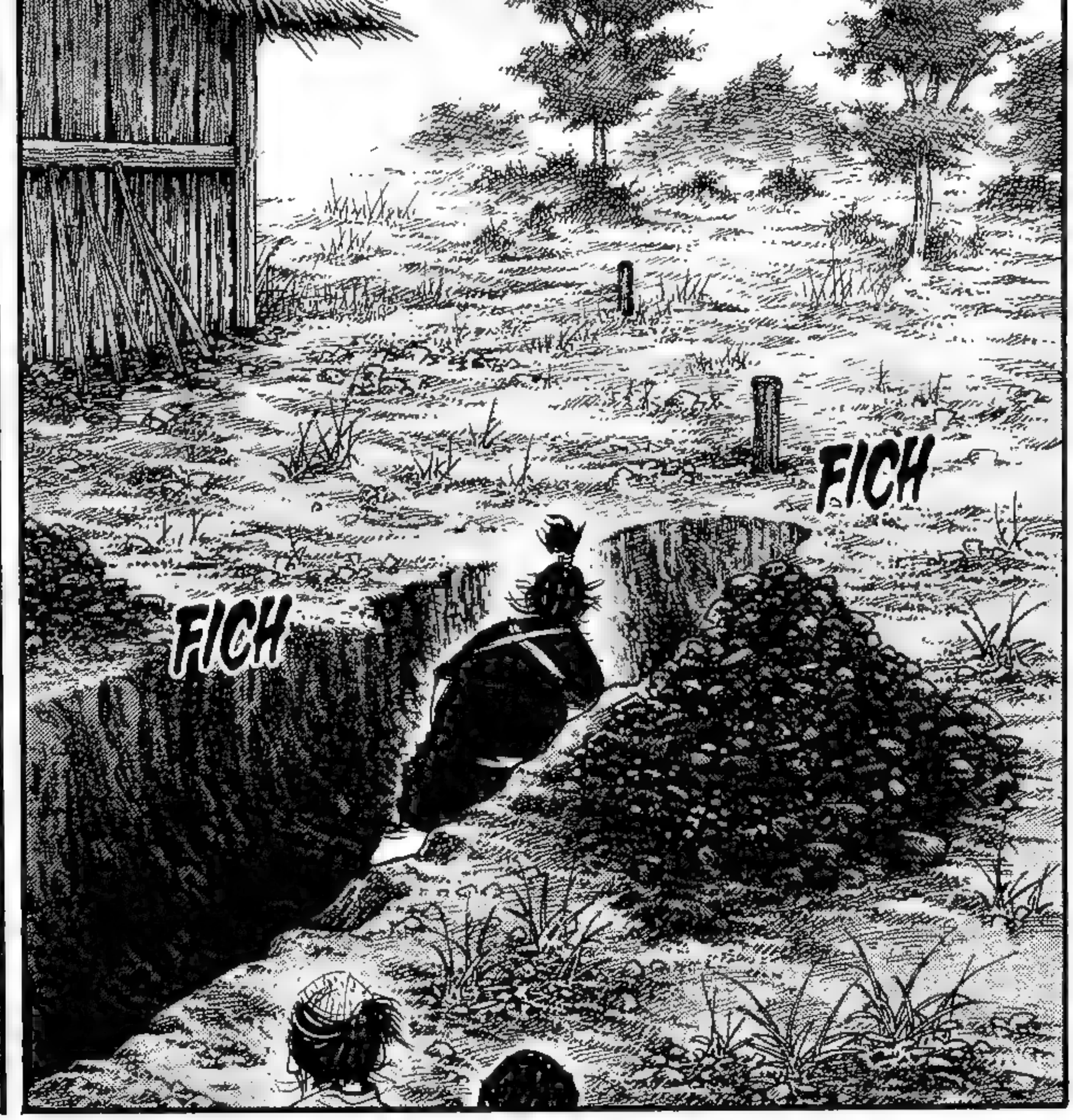
WHAT DOES WINNING MEAN...?

THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.

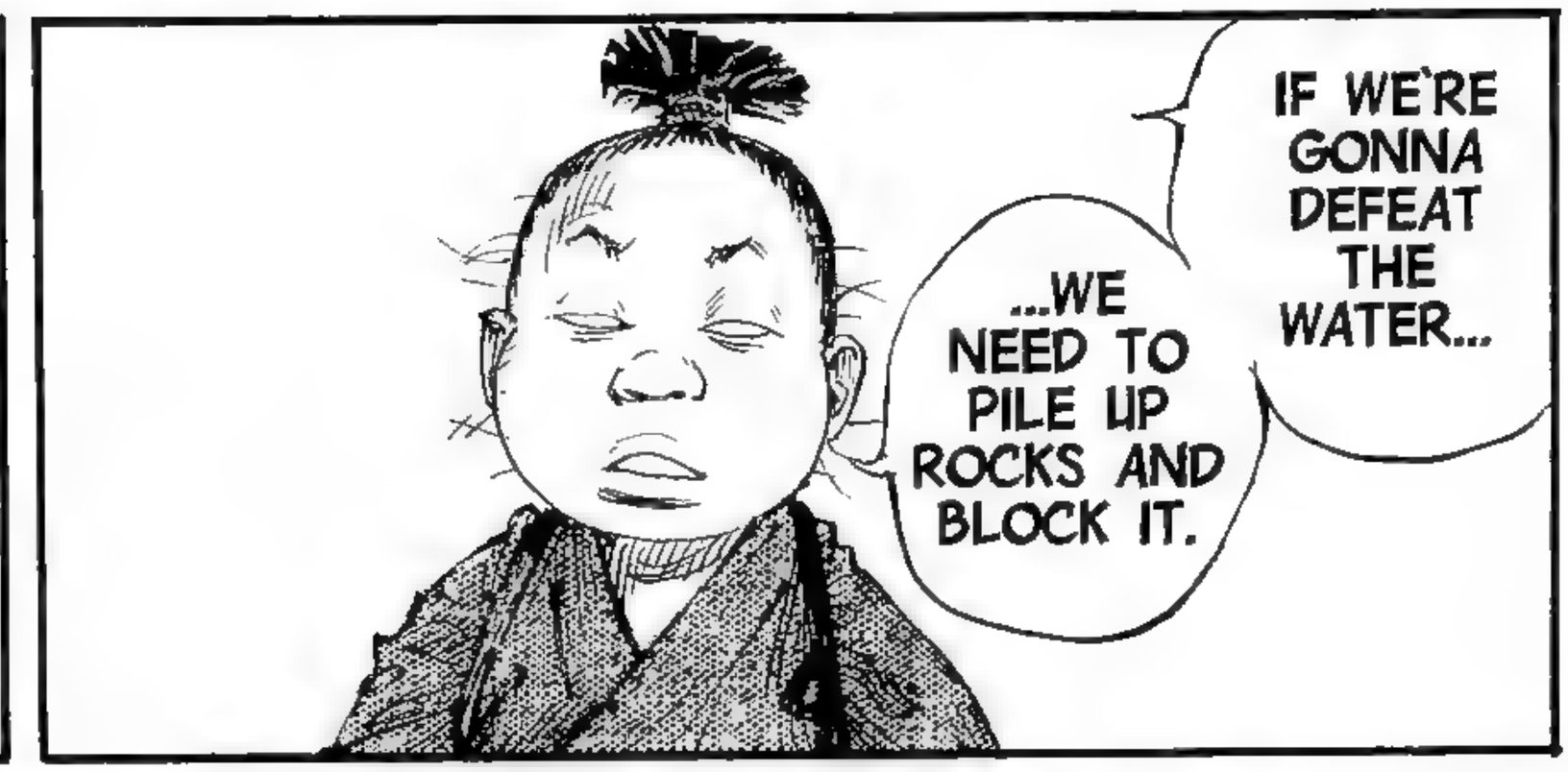
IT'S
BEYOND BEING
INVINCIBLE.



THAT'S QUITE A DITCH...
YOU DID THIS ON YOUR OWN?
NO, THE TWO OF US DID IT.
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW?


FICH
FICH

?

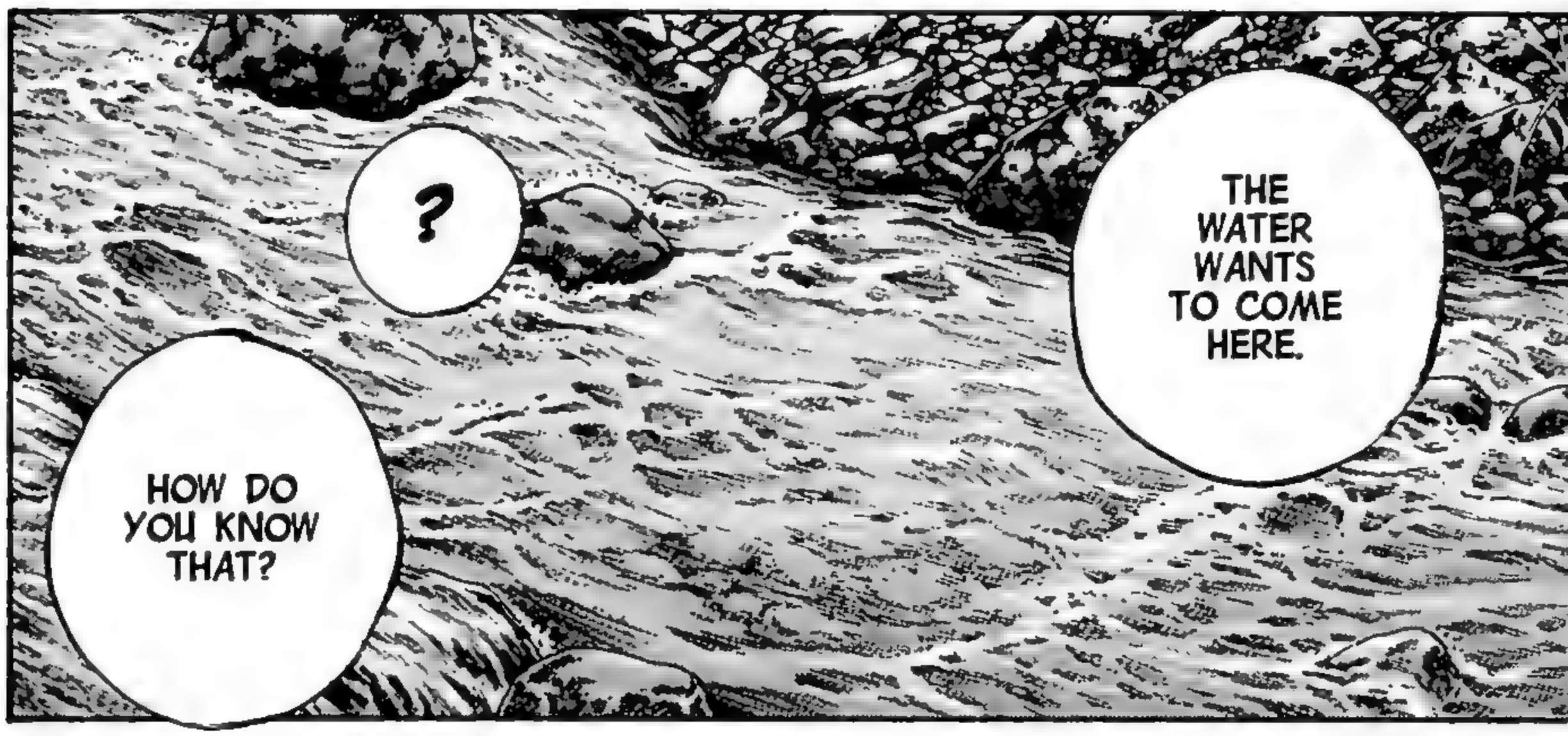

...WE NEED TO PILE UP ROCKS AND BLOCK IT.
IF WE'RE GONNA DEFEAT THE WATER...

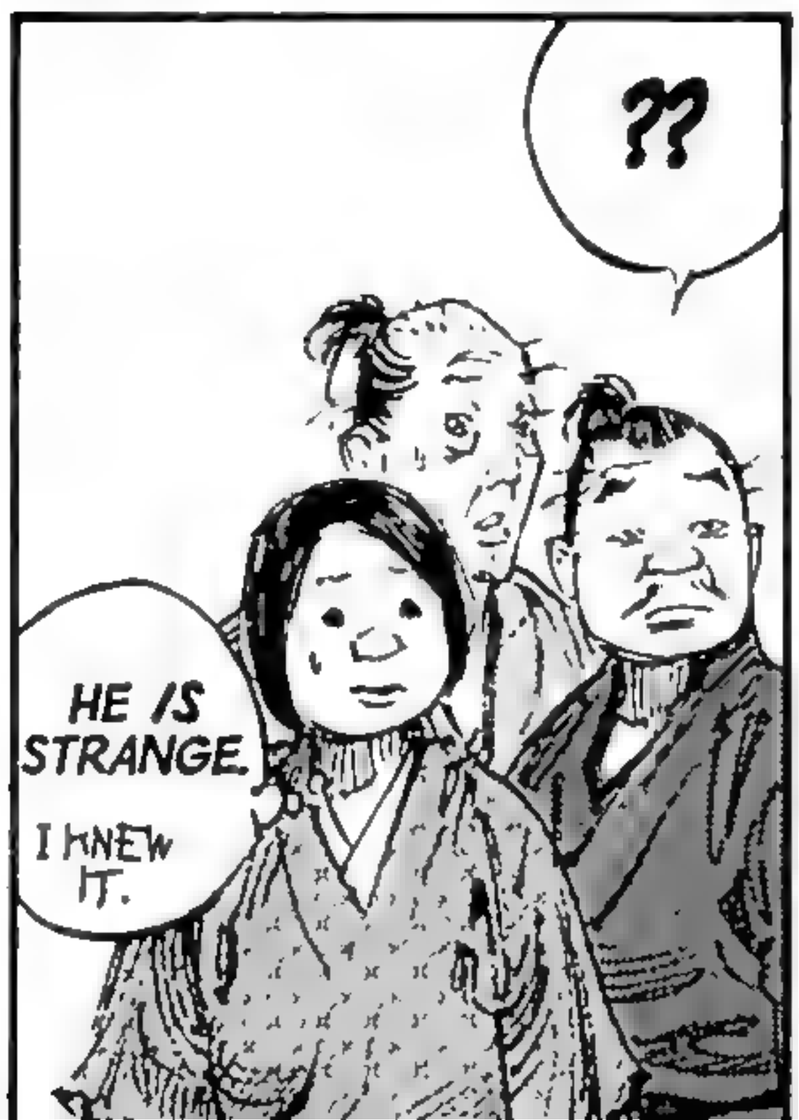
NOW LET'S SEE...
THAT IS, THE WATER ...
HOW'D IT GO?
WE'RE NOT FIGHTING THE WATER.

...BUT WE'LL LOSE AT SOME POINT.
...AND LOSE OUR CROPS.
WE MAY WIN OCCASION-ALLY...

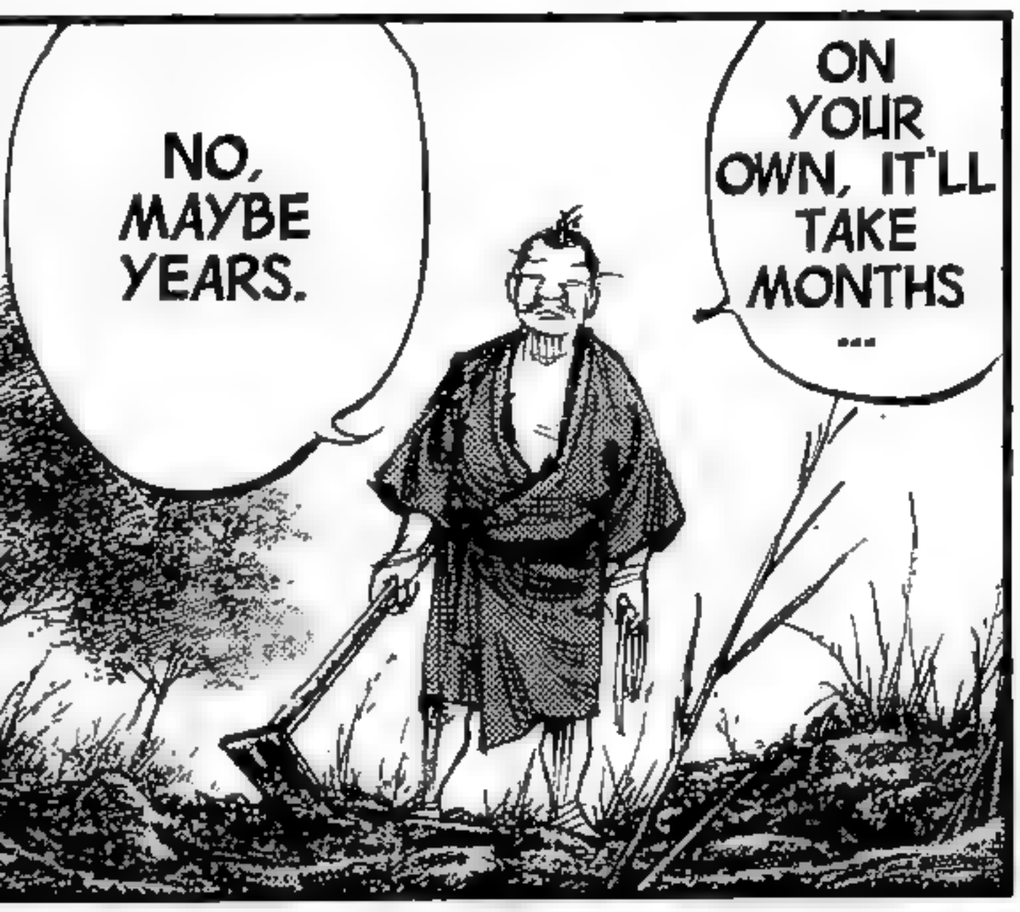
THE RIVER SAYS SO...
THIS IS RIGHT SPOT.

WHY SO NEAR THE SHACK?
YOU MEAN YOU'RE DIGGING THIS ROUTE TO CHANNEL OFF THE FLOOD.
BUT THAT'LL TAKE FOREVER.
YOU SHOULD BE FURTHER AWAY.


?
THE WATER WANTS TO COME HERE.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?


??
HE IS STRANGE.
I KNEW IT.

THE SAME STUFF THAT FLOWS THROUGH OUR BODIES...
...FLOWS THROUGH THAT RIVER.


NO, MAYBE YEARS.
ON YOUR OWN, IT'LL TAKE MONTHS ...

SO WE DIG ALONG THESE STAKES?

FICH
FICH

?

FICH
THAT'S RIGHT.
WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THE RAINS START AGAIN.

FICH

FICH

FICH

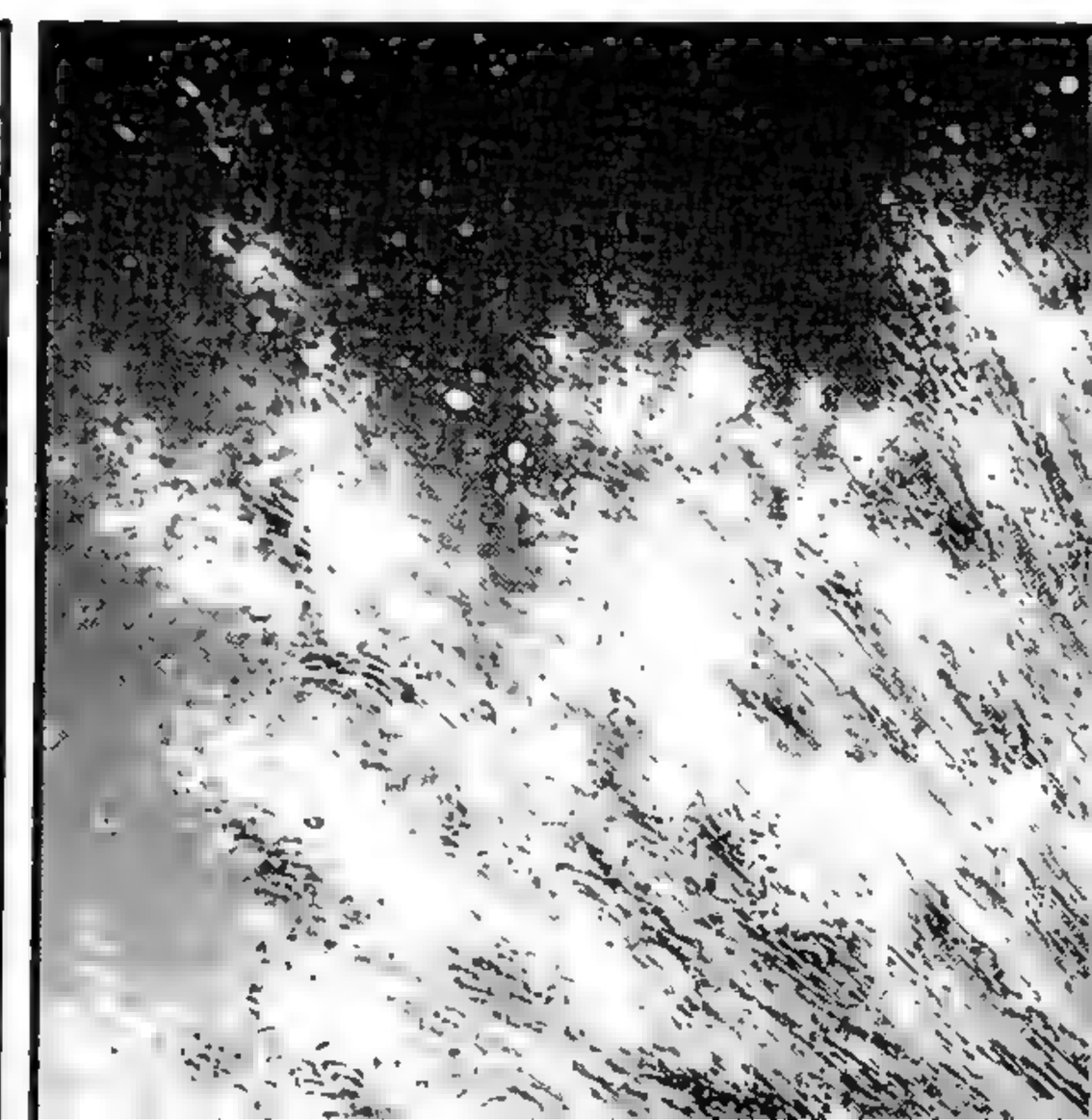
SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...

FSSHHH

!!

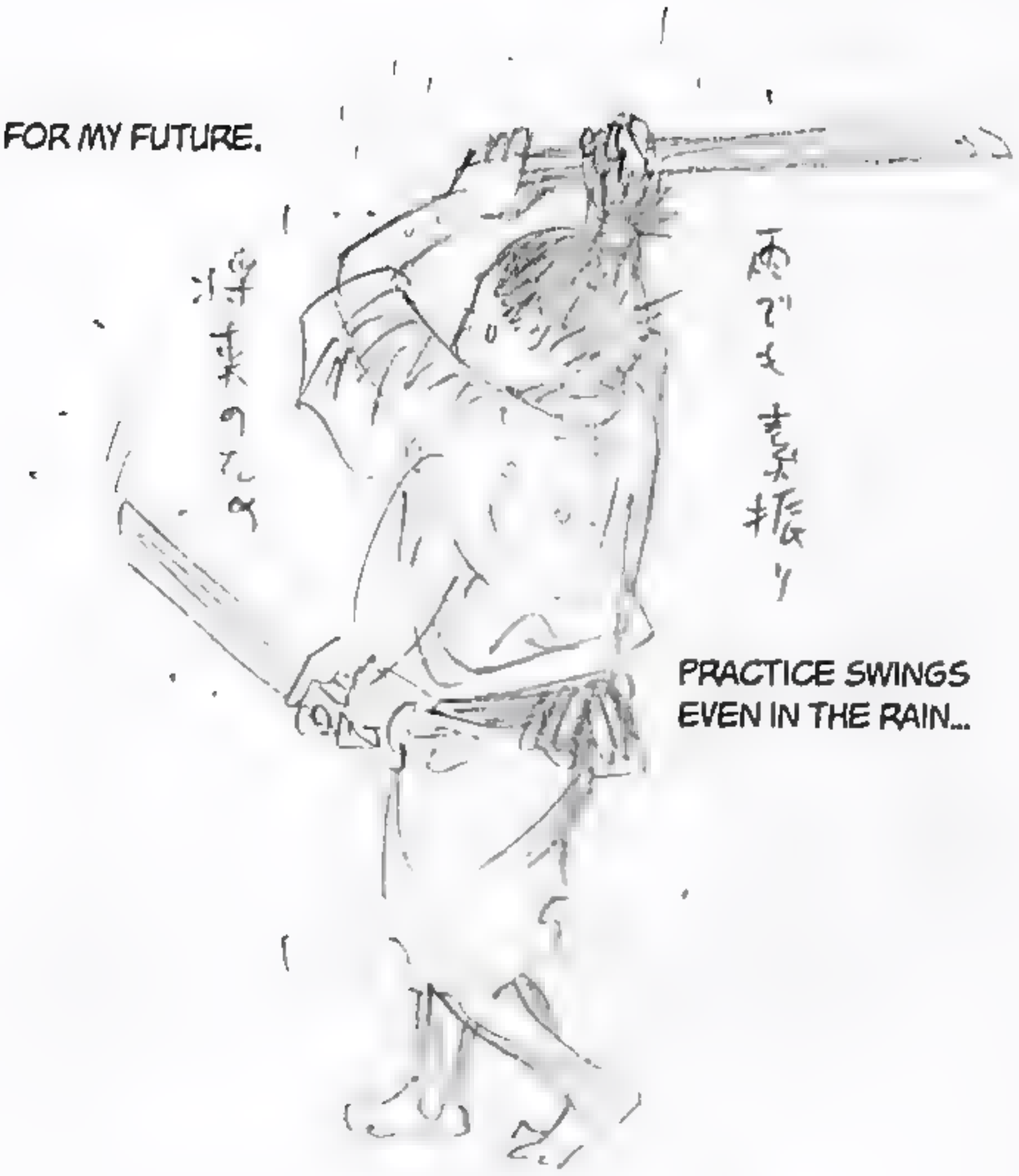
I-IT WON'T BUDGE!
MOVE!

IT'S COMING!
OPEN THE FLOOD-GATE!!

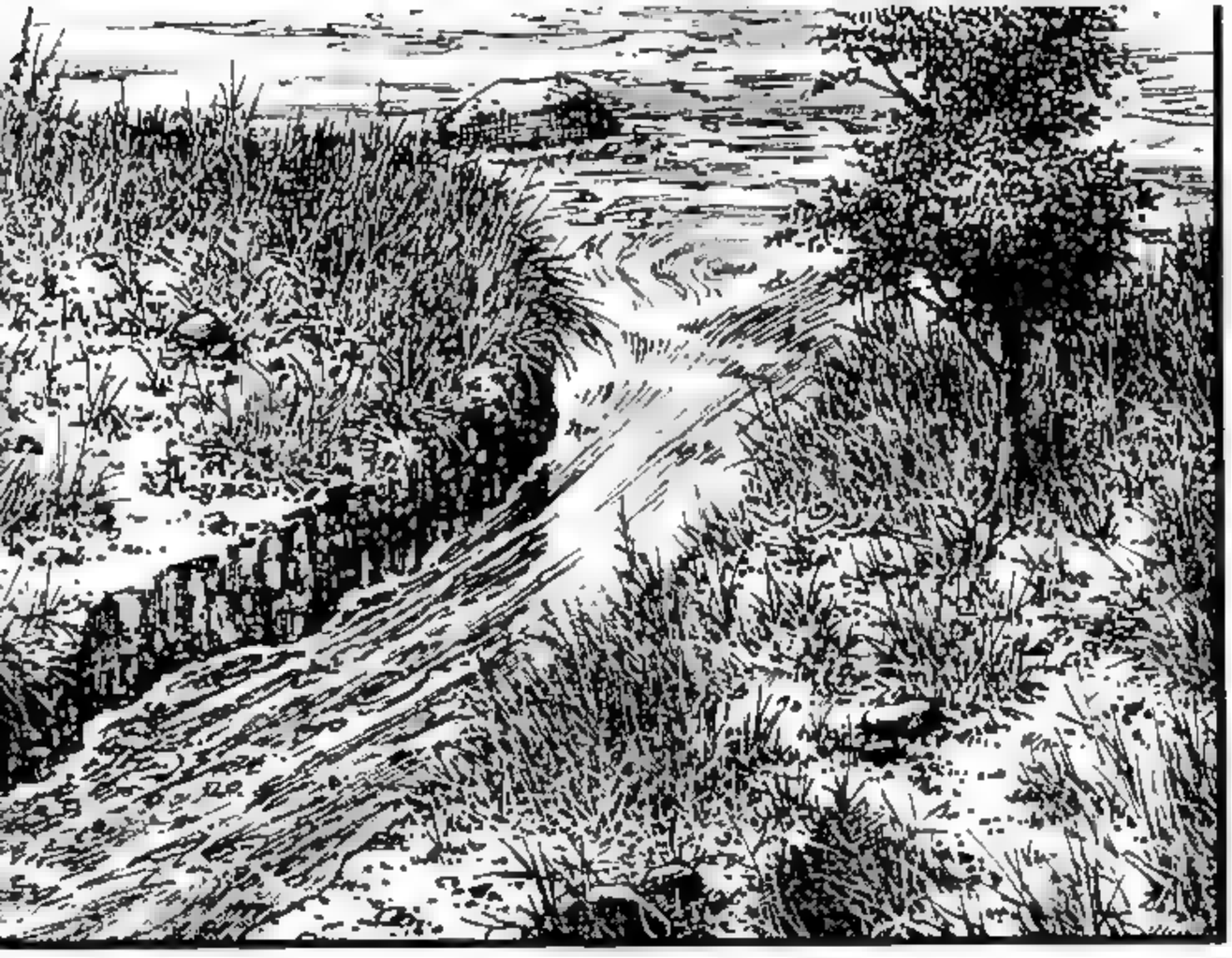


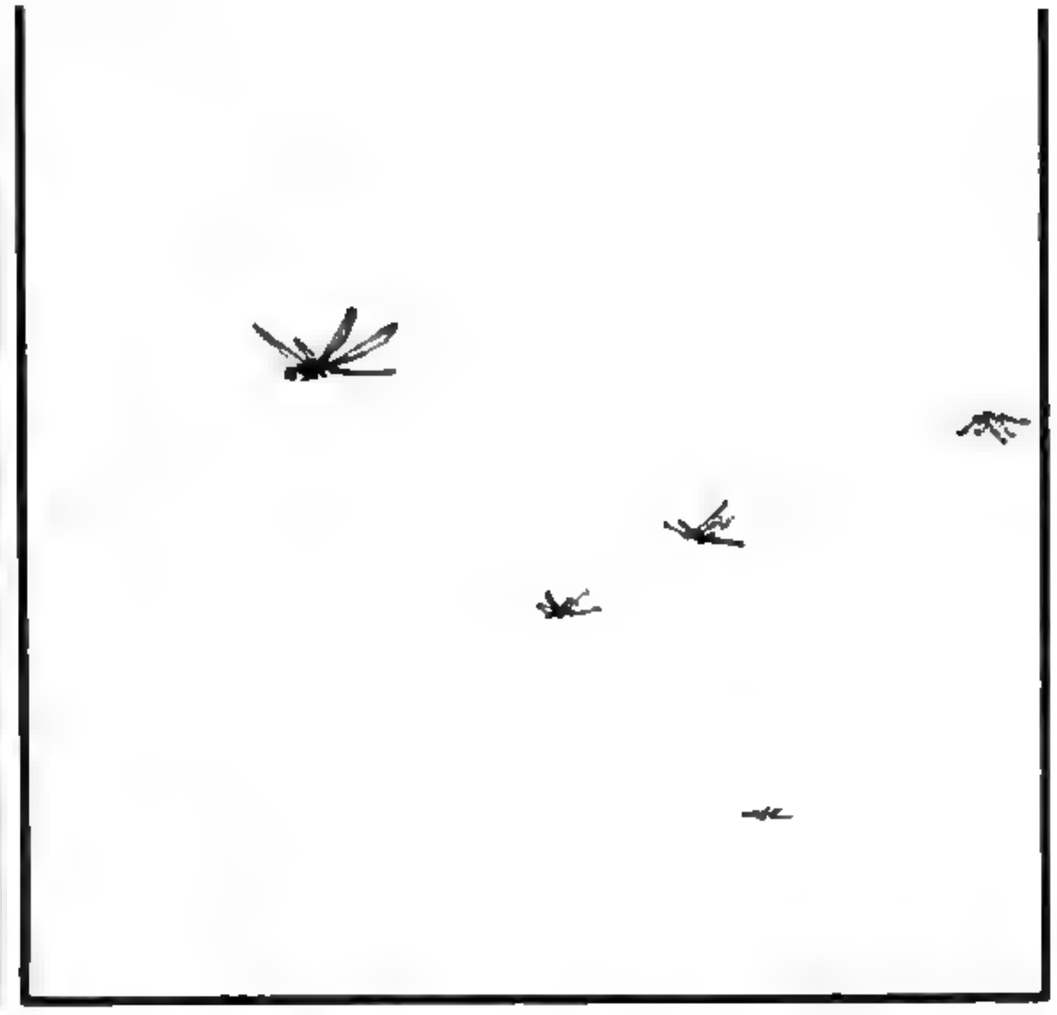
YEAHH!!

FOR MY FUTURE.



PRACTICE SWINGS
EVEN IN THE RAIN...





BUT...

WE DIDN'T HAVE A SINGLE FLOOD THIS SUMMER...
...THANKS TO THE CHANNEL.

NOT GONNA LAST.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *THIS.*

#306 Infinite Smile

REALLY?
IS TAKEZŌ DOING FARM WORK?
IS HE...?

...

FWP

HE'S OUT TO KILL.
...!!
NO FARMER LOOKS LIKE *THAT.*

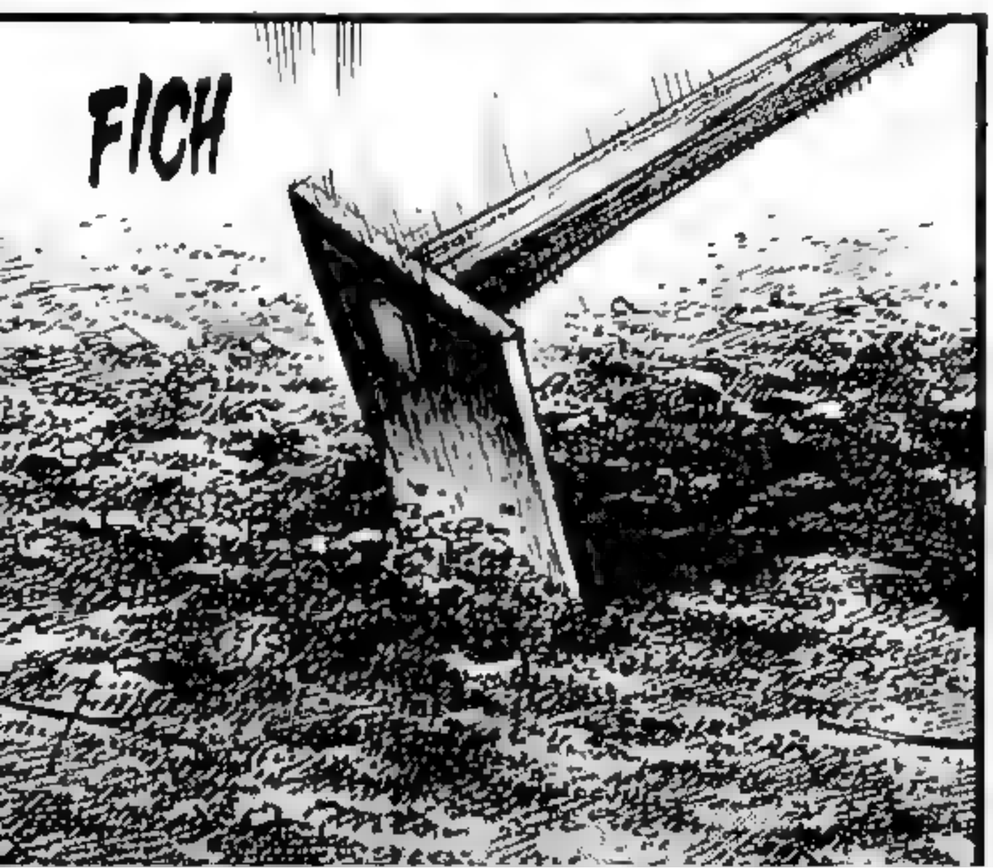
FICH

COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM *US.*
HE MAKES A LIVING BY CUTTING PEOPLE DOWN.

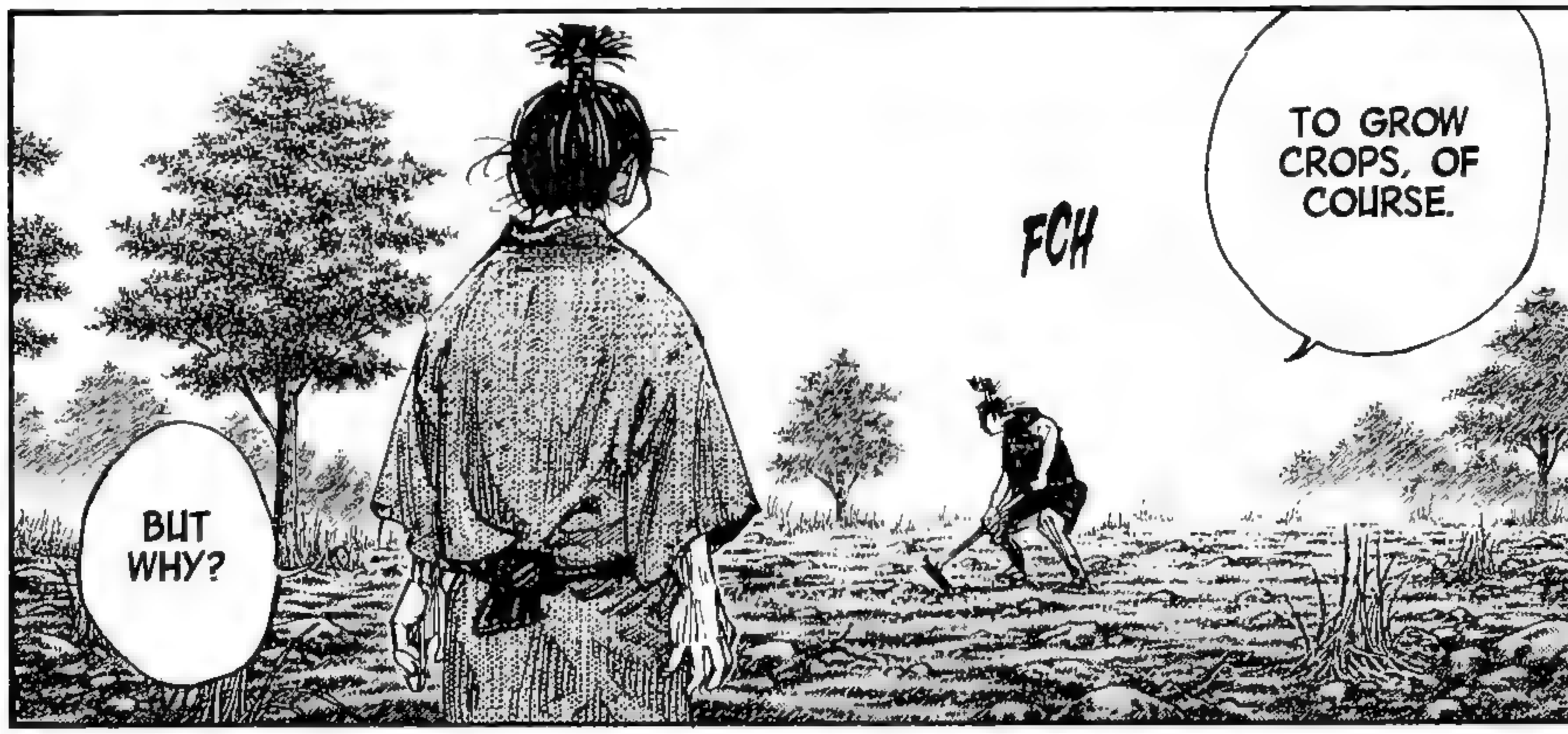
HMM...

SEEMS THE SUMMER HEAT'S PASSING.

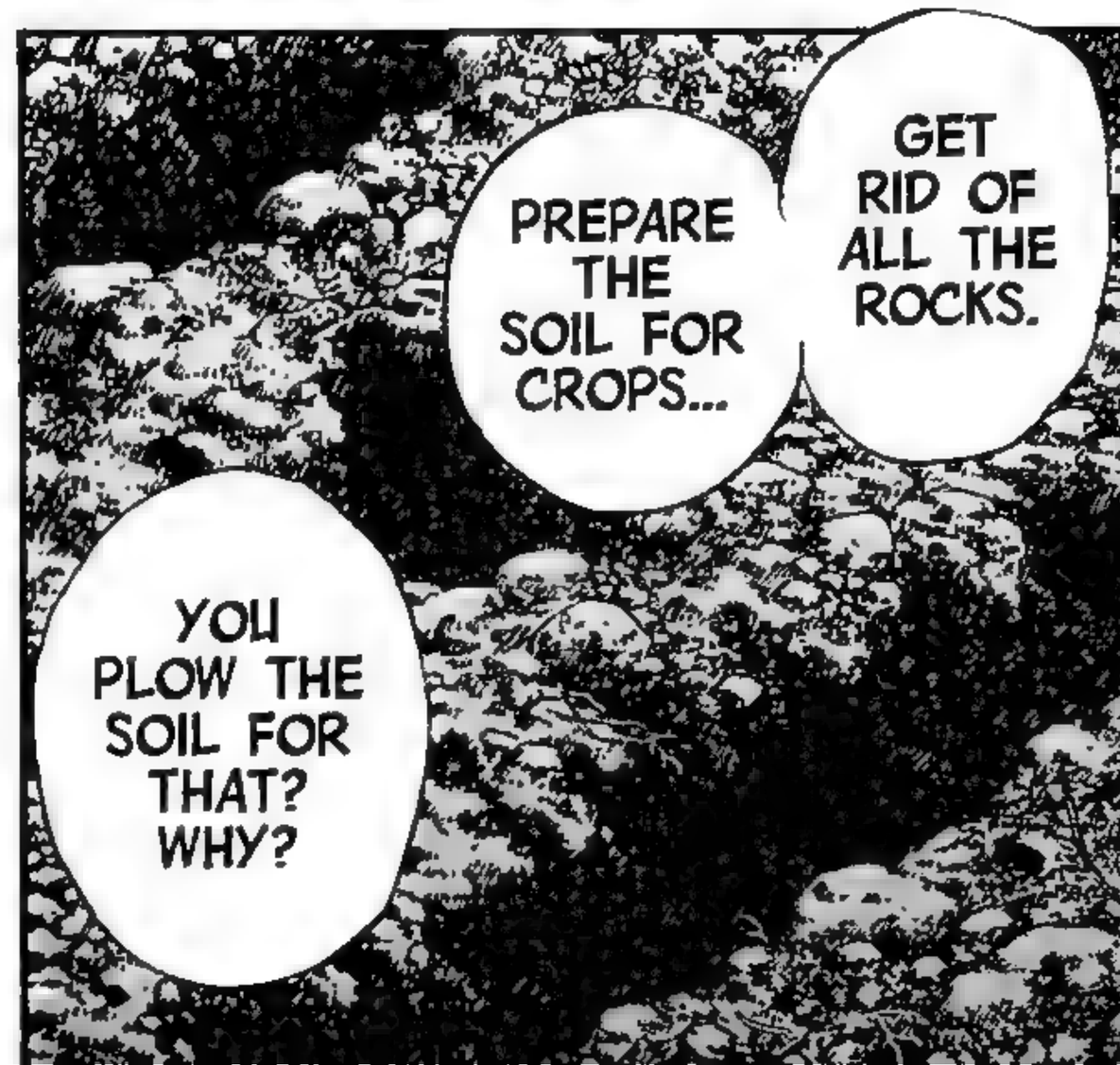
COME SPRING, WE'LL PLANT RICE.



WHY ARE YOU PLOWING?


BUT WHY?
FCH
TO GROW CROPS, OF COURSE.

...


YOU PLOW THE SOIL FOR THAT? WHY?
PREPARE THE SOIL FOR CROPS...
GET RID OF ALL THE ROCKS.

...

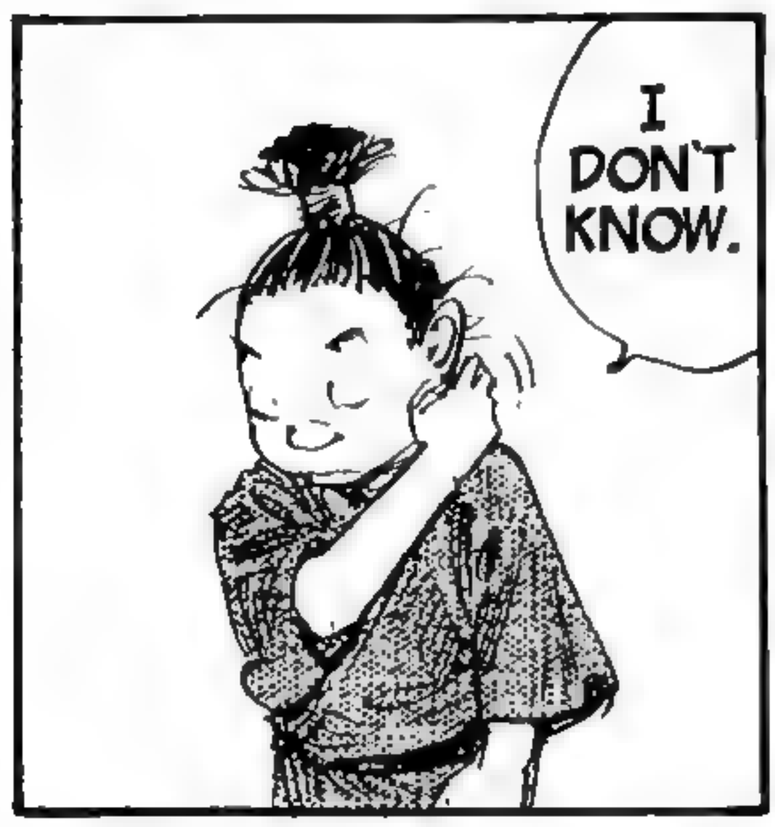
THOSE TREES AND WEEDS ARE GROWING ON THEIR OWN.
NO NEED TO PLOW FOR THEM.

WE DON'T JUST EAT THINGS THAT GROW WILD. THAT'S PART OF...
...HUMAN WISDOM...
PEOPLE GROW FOOD.

IF THIS LAND DOESN'T GROW ANY-THING WE CAN EAT...
...WHY WAS I BORN HERE?

...
ALL THESE QUESTIONS TO SLACK OFF! GET TO WORK, IORI!

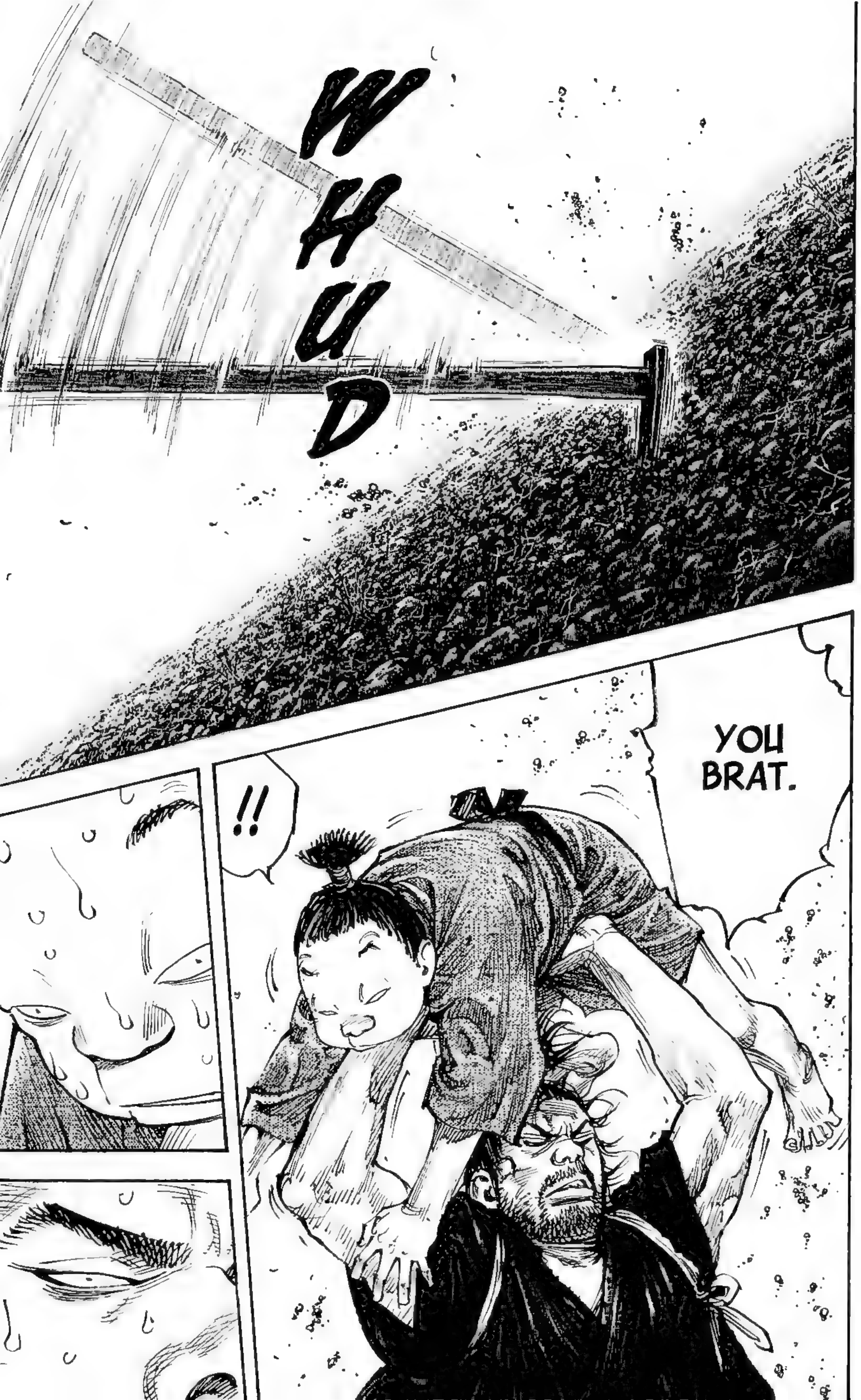
MAYBE IT MEANS I WASN'T MEANT TO BE.


I DON'T KNOW.

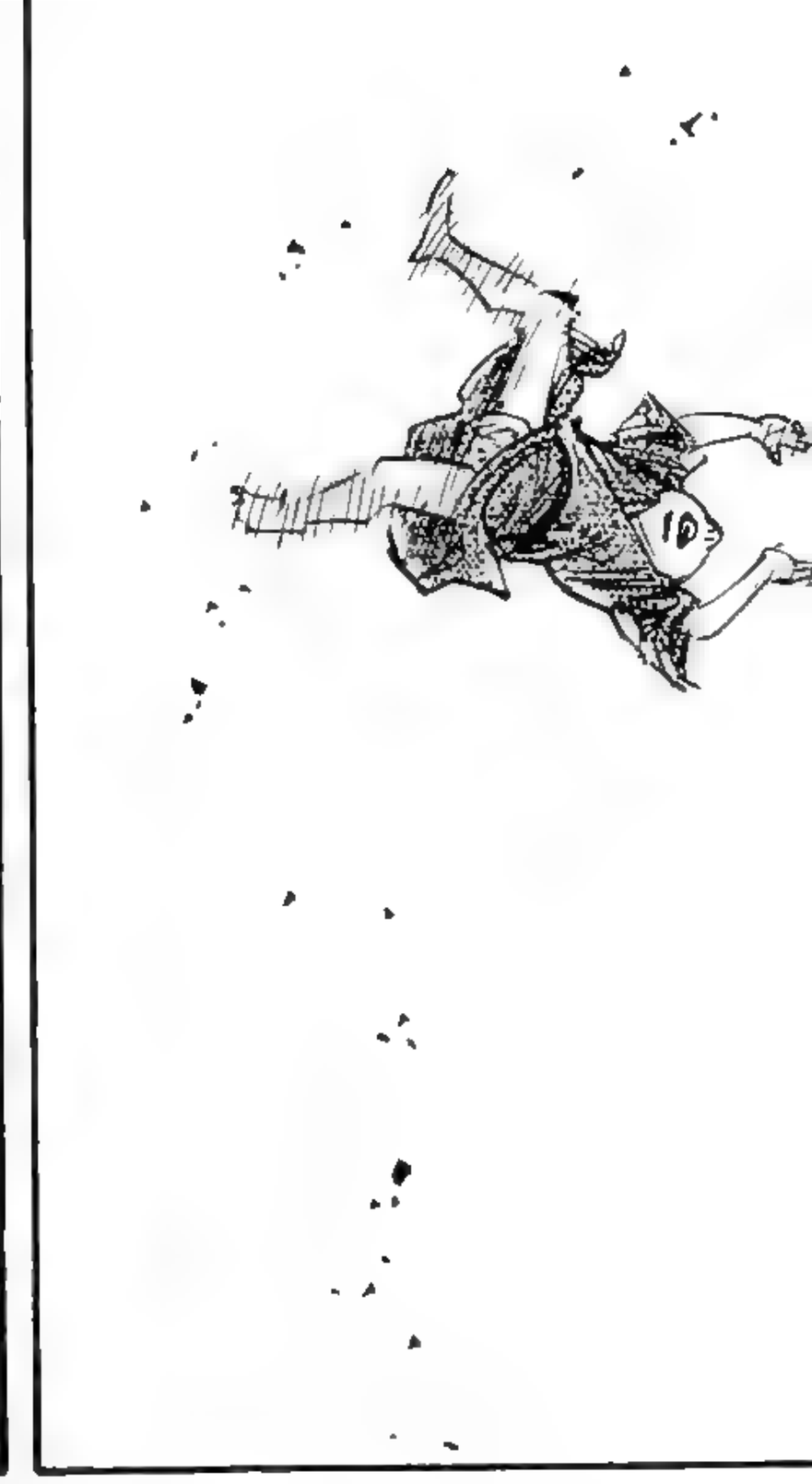
THAT'S WHY WE'RE PLOWING THE FIELD.
NEXT YEAR, IT'LL YIELD CROPS.

LOOKS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE KILLING THE SOIL WITH THAT HOE.

YOU'VE KILLED PEOPLE WITH YOUR SWORD, RIGHT?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...

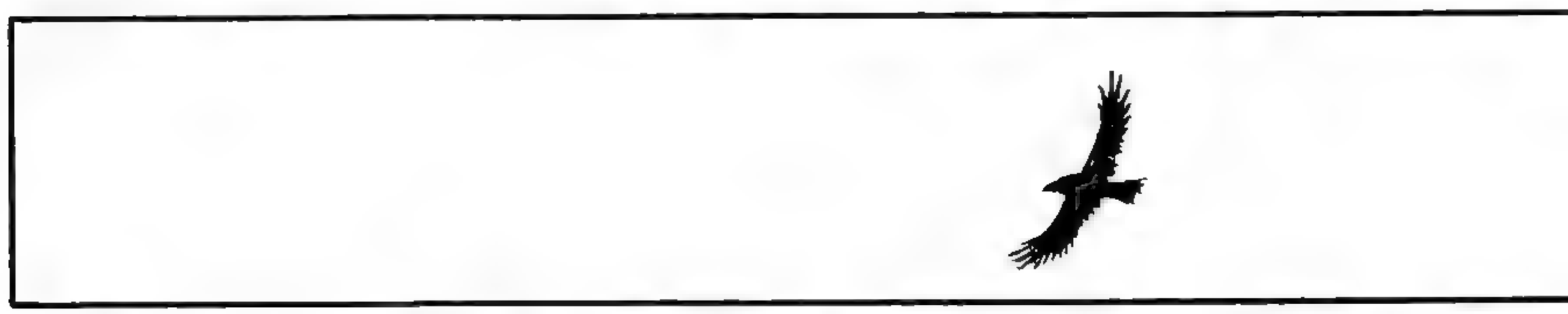

WHO
YOU BRAT.
!!

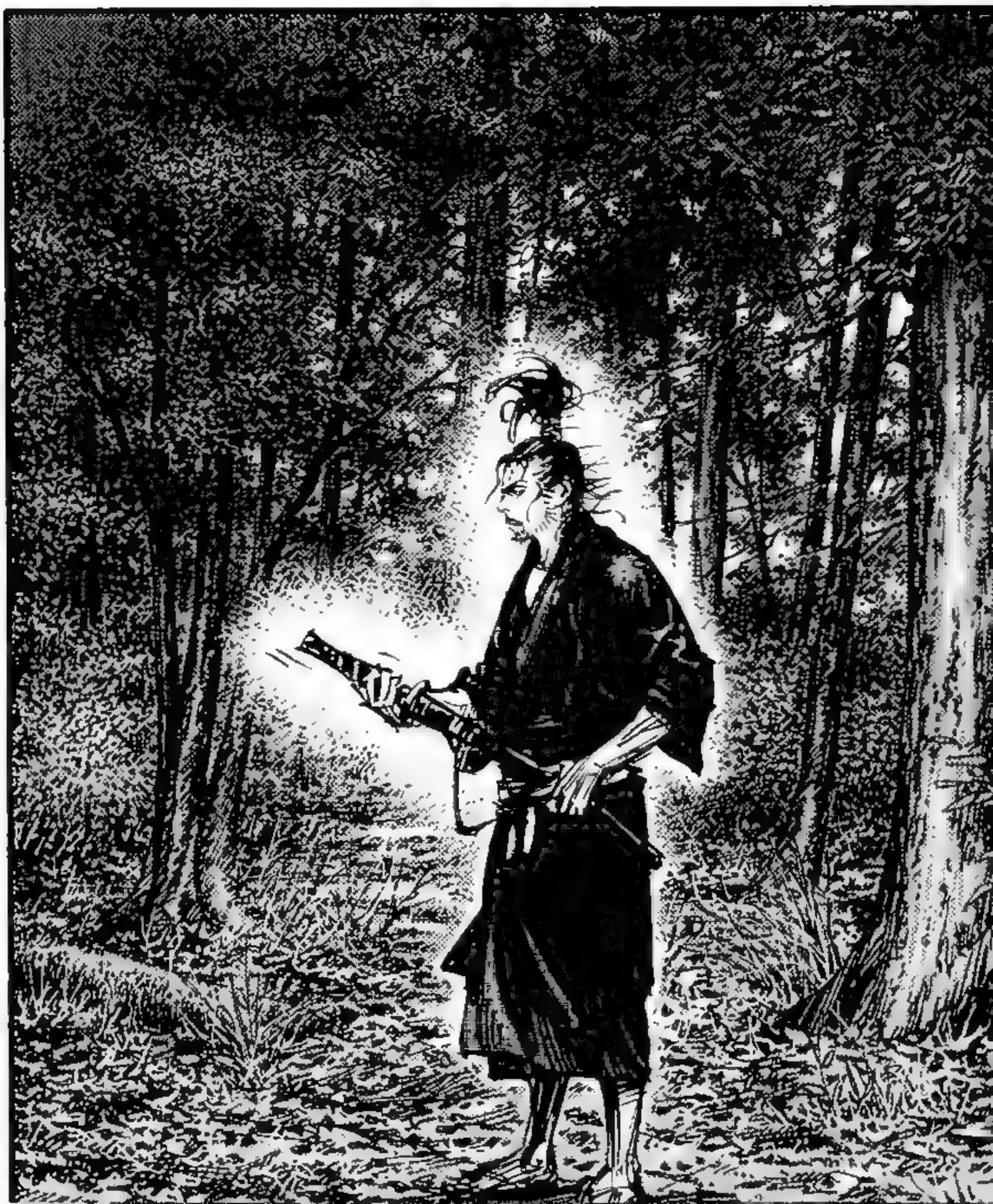
...!!



WHAT IS IT?
HM?

CAN YOU DO THAT...
...AGAIN ?





HYUU...

SWP

HYUU

SIGH

HYUUU

IT'S A WORLD OF PEOPLE.

IT'S MADE BY MAN.

HAAH

HMPH.

WHATEVER HAPPENS IN THE WORLD.

DRAW ALL OF IT IN.

ALL RIGHT.

DRAW THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN IN.

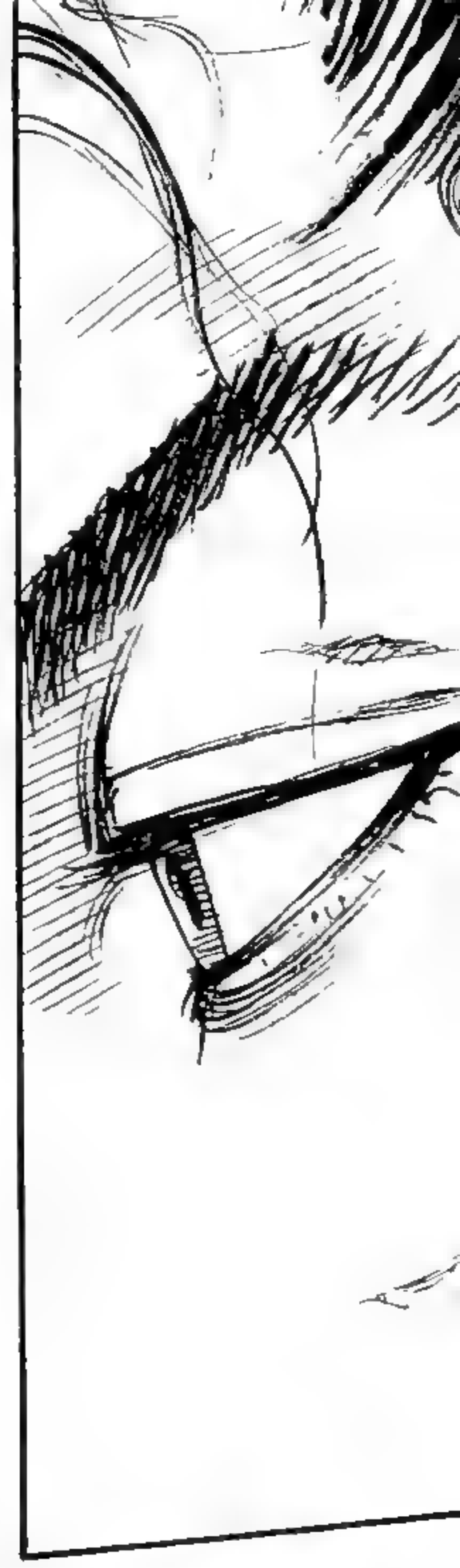
THE SPACE INSIDE ME...

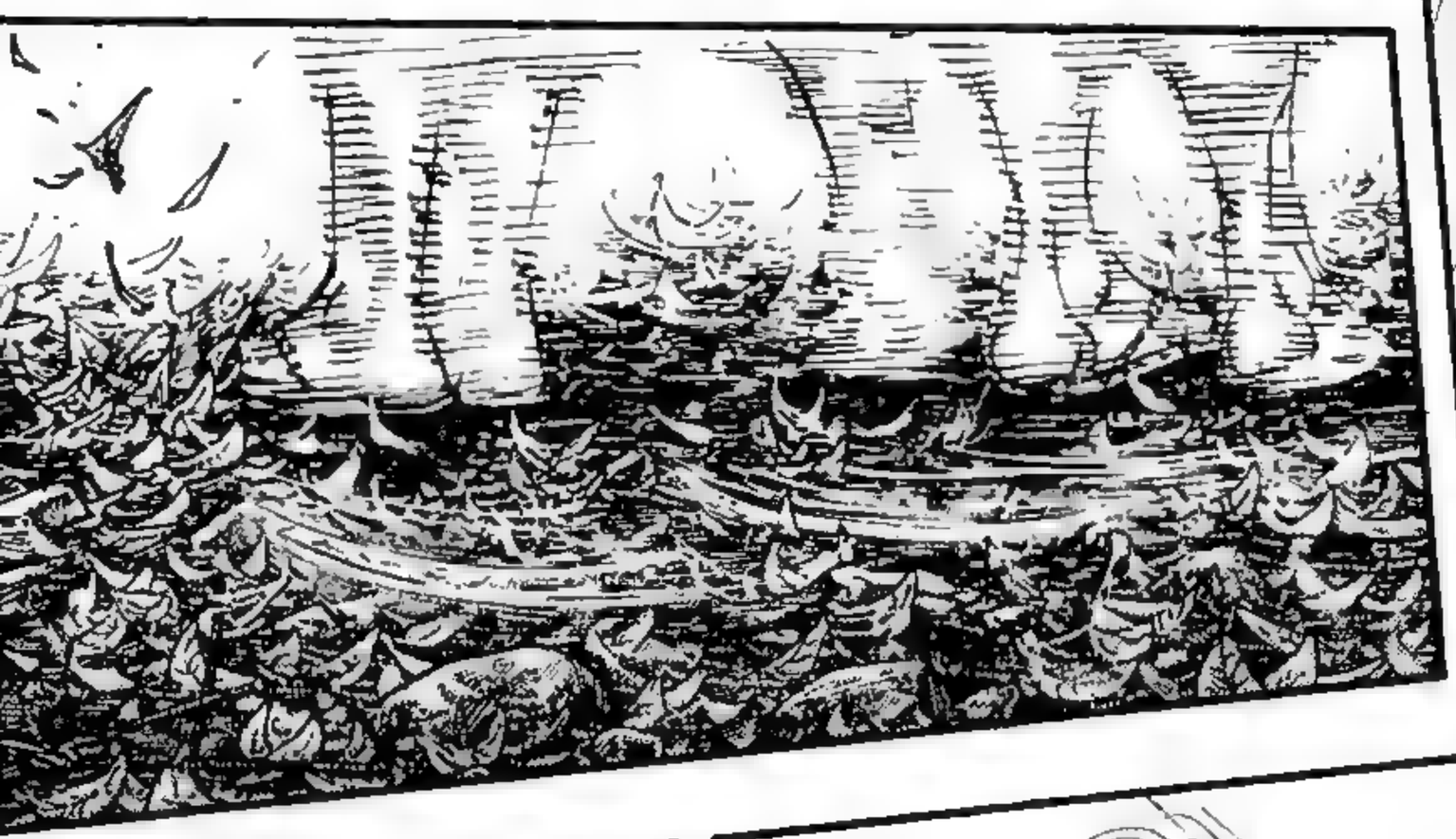
THE EMPTINESS EXPANDED.

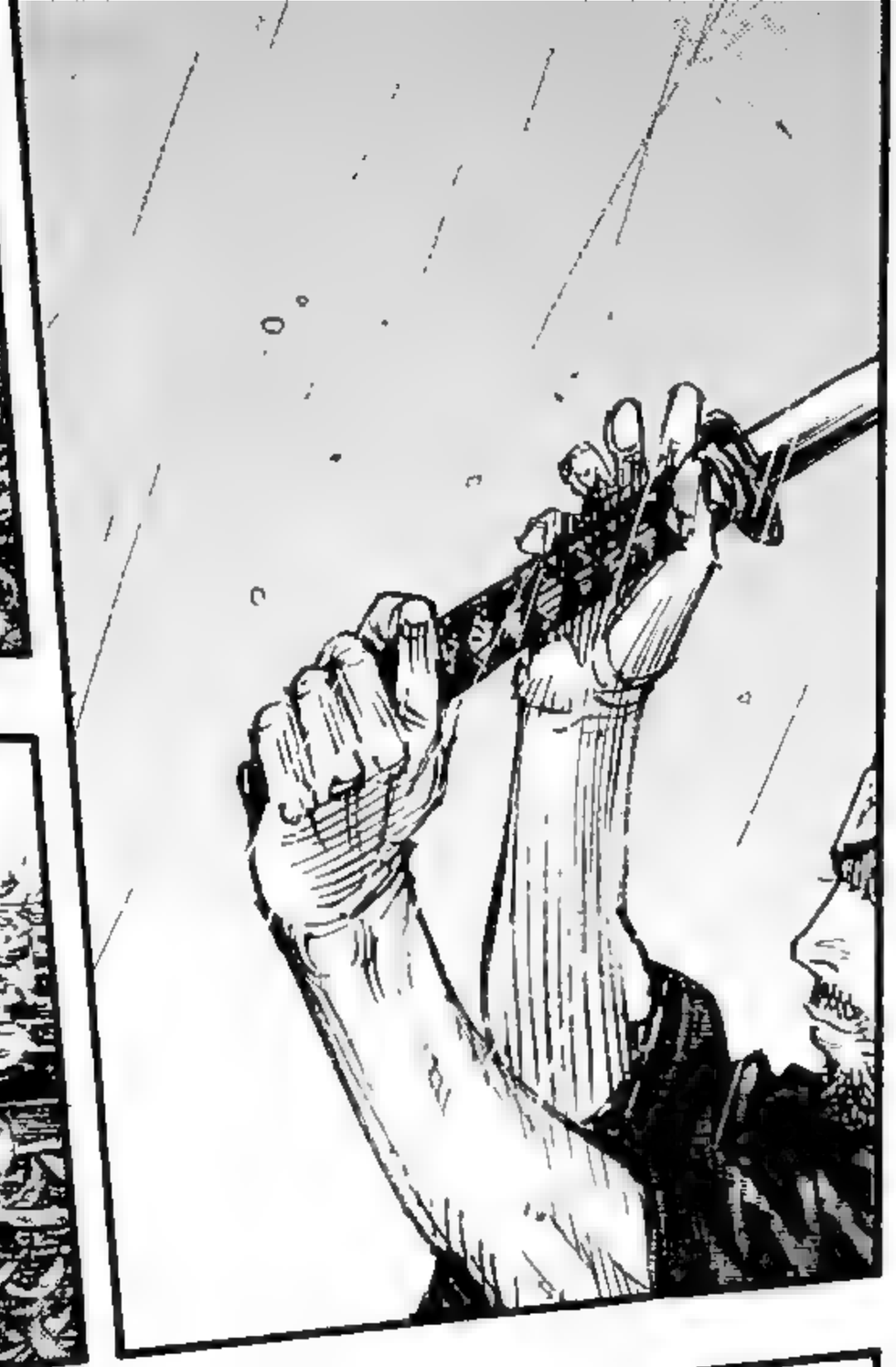
I'M FULL OF EMPTINESS.

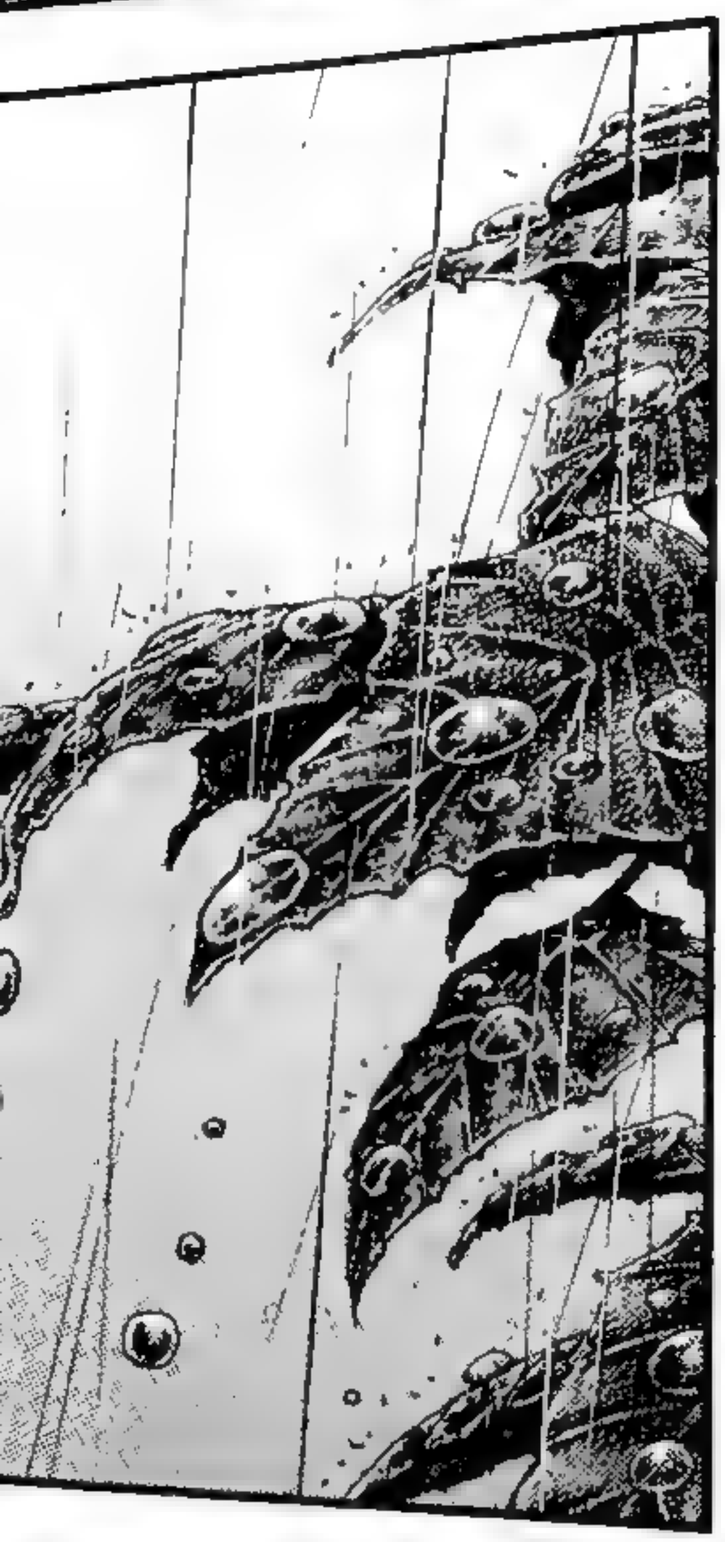
HA HA HA

YAHHH







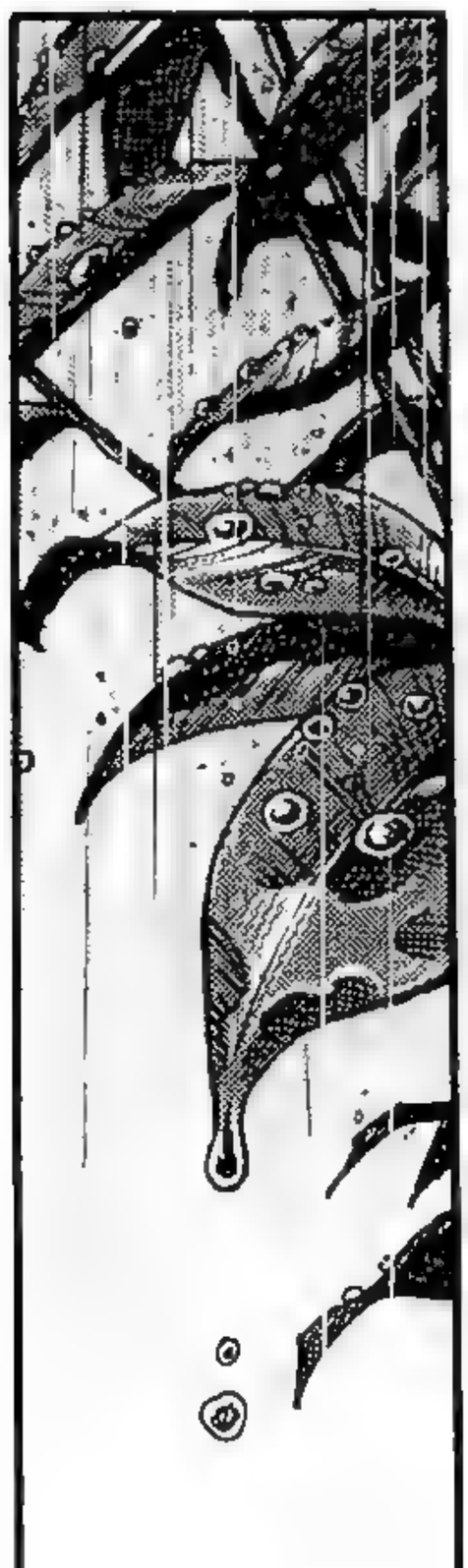


...
TOO SLOW.

NOT "TA...
...TUM." MORE LIKE...

"TUMP"!

"TIMP"!



"...FWOOSH"

"TAWOOSH"...

JUST AS THIS TREE IS THIS TREE...
AND THAT TREE IS THAT...

I AM I...

WE ARE AS WE ARE.

THE INFINITE...

"THWAAA"...

..."SHHH"?

CHOMP
MY FORM GOT IN THE WAY.

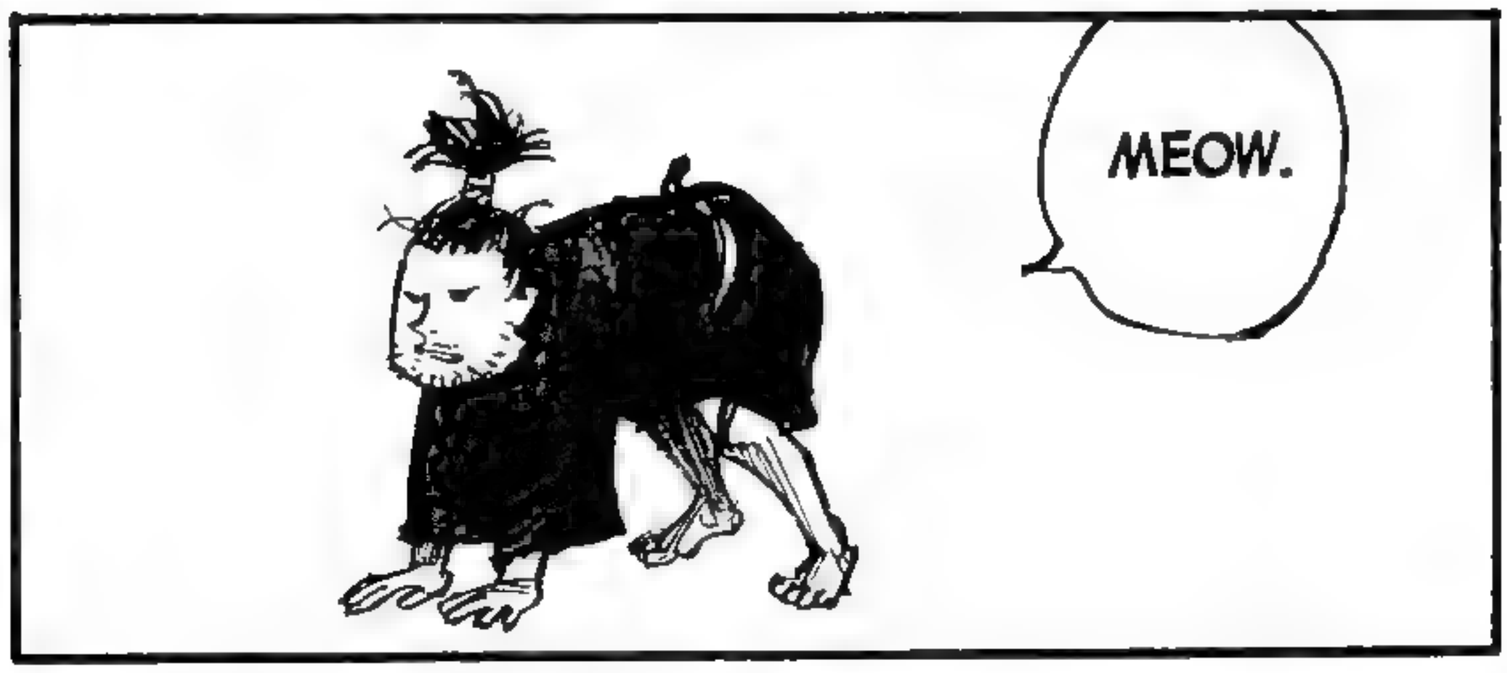
...OF THE NATURAL FLOW.
MY HAND GOT IN THE WAY...

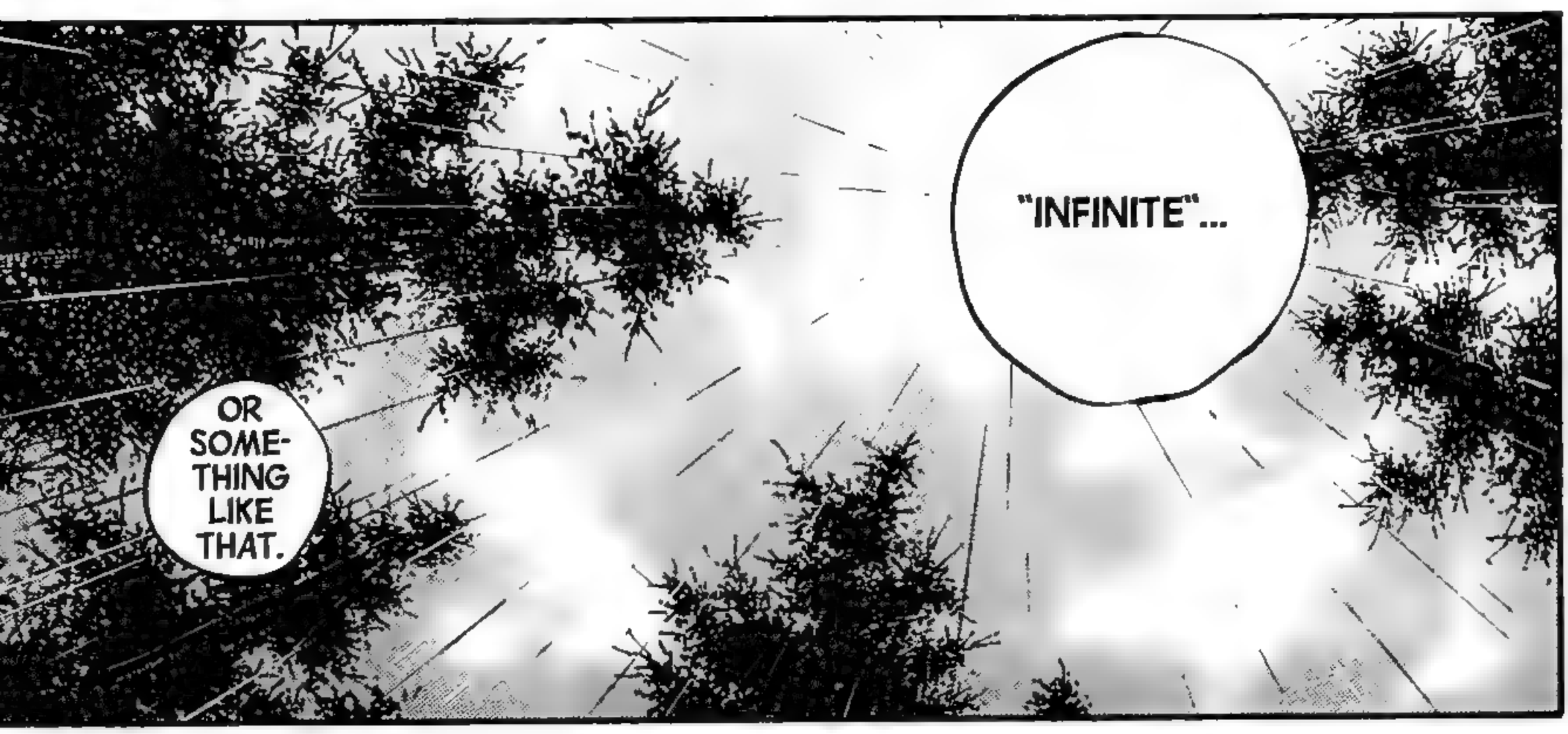
"HOW COULD I STILL BE"?

HOW COULD I STILL BE CONCERNED ABOUT FORM...
...AND SWORDS-MANSHIP?

"I" SHOULDN'T BE THERE.

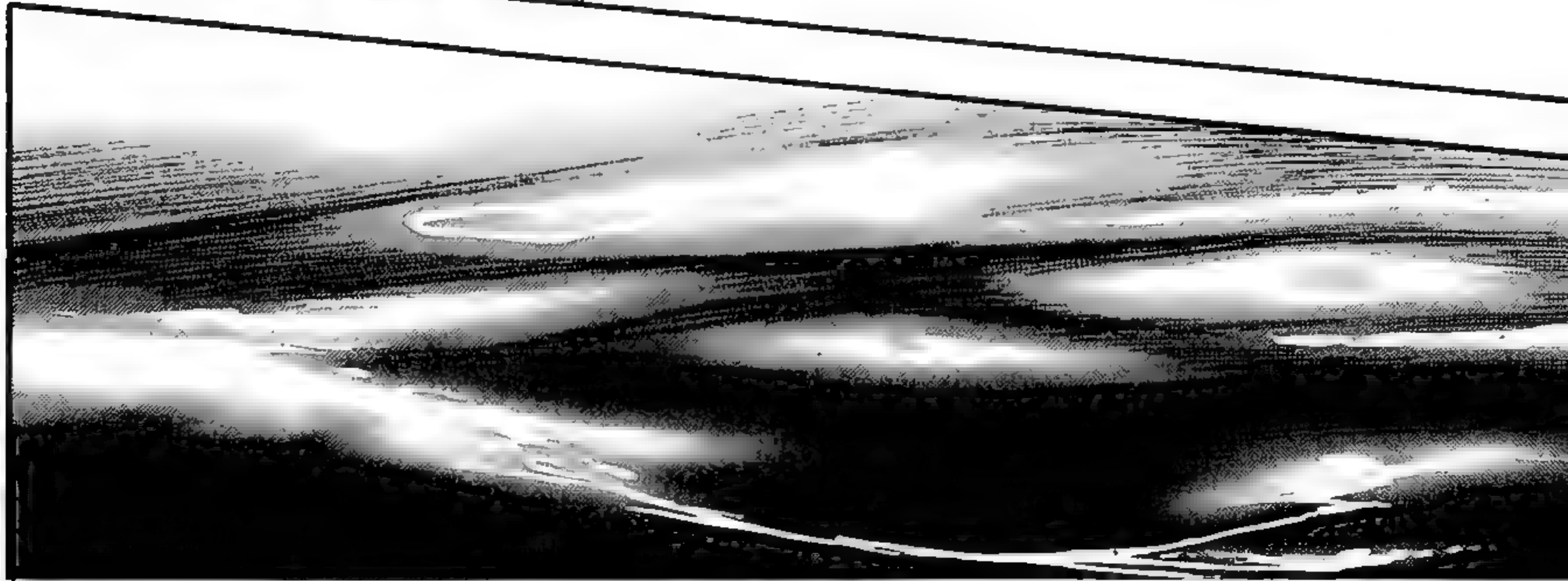
THAT'S THE PROBLEM.





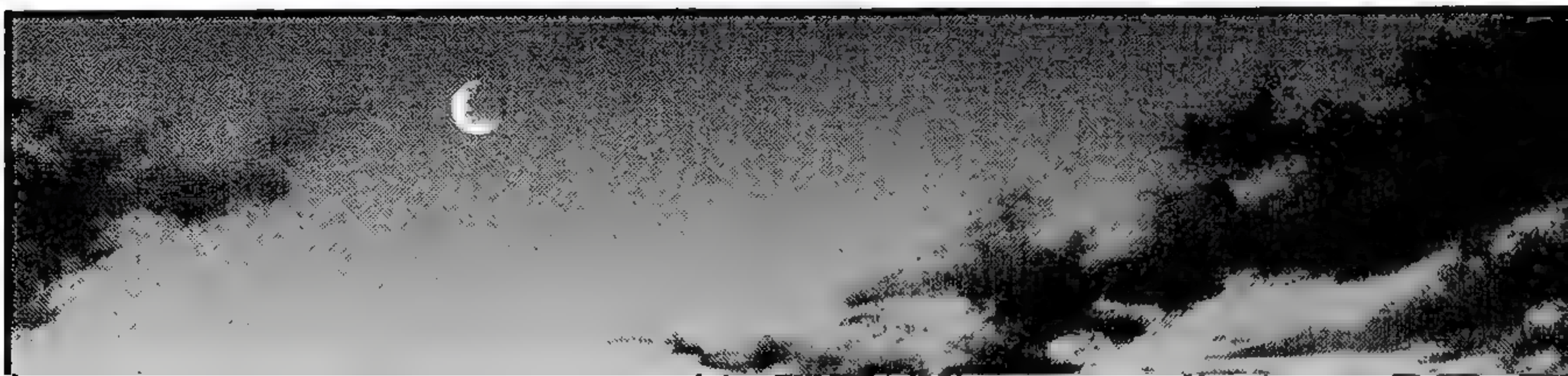
CONTINUE TO FEEL...

...THE FLOW OF THAT SOMETHING WITHIN YOUR BODY...



AND WHAT'S NEXT AFTER THAT...
LET NOTHING GET IN THE WAY.
JUST PREPARE YOURSELF.
DO NOT INTERRUPT THE FLOW...
AND PREPARE FOR WHAT'S NEXT...
"FWWOM"
LET THINGS BE...

...THE WAY THEY ARE...



...?

SOB
SOB

I SAW YOU WITH YOUR SWORD TODAY. YOU'RE IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEAGUE FROM MY DAD.

YAH!
YAH!

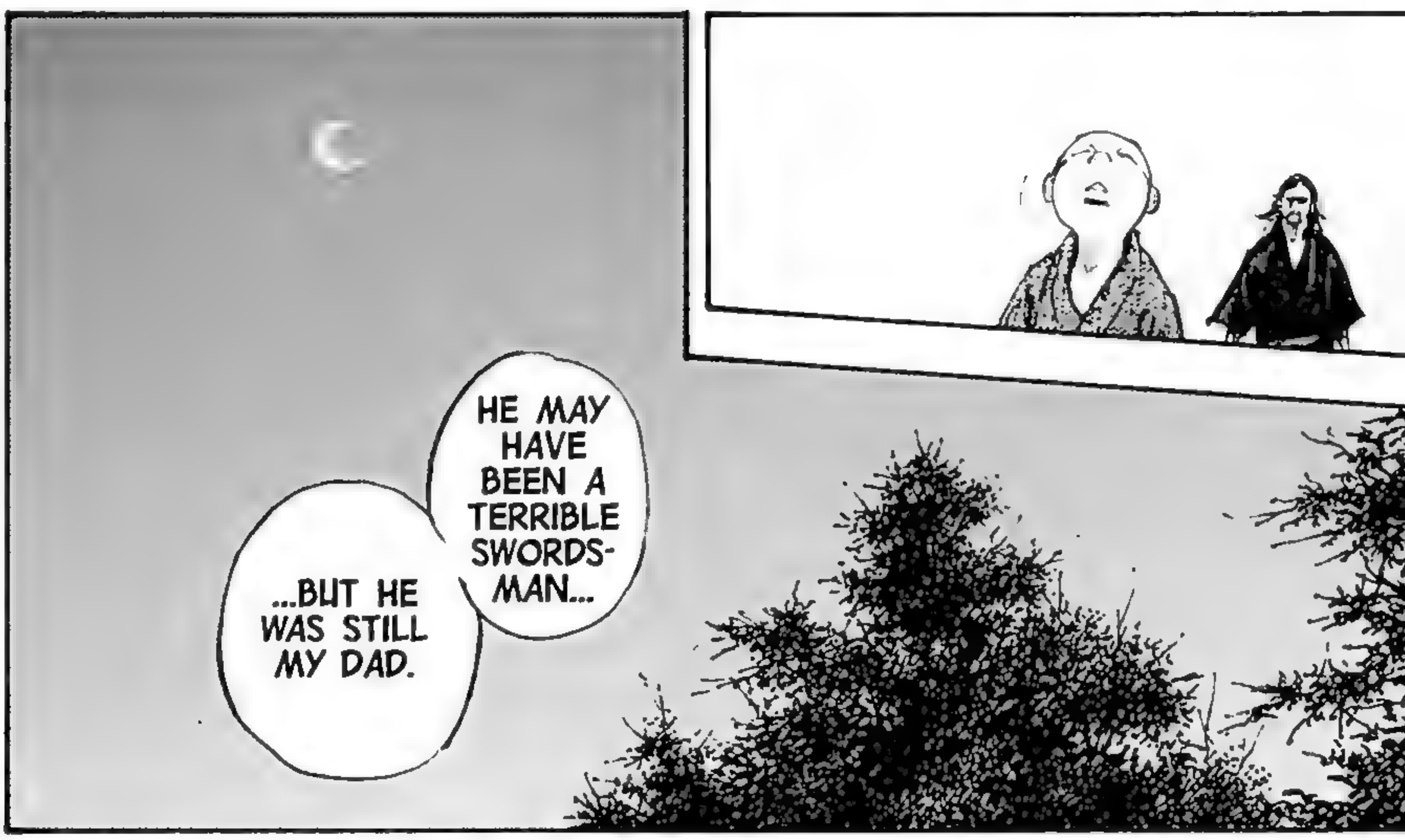
I HAD A DREAM.

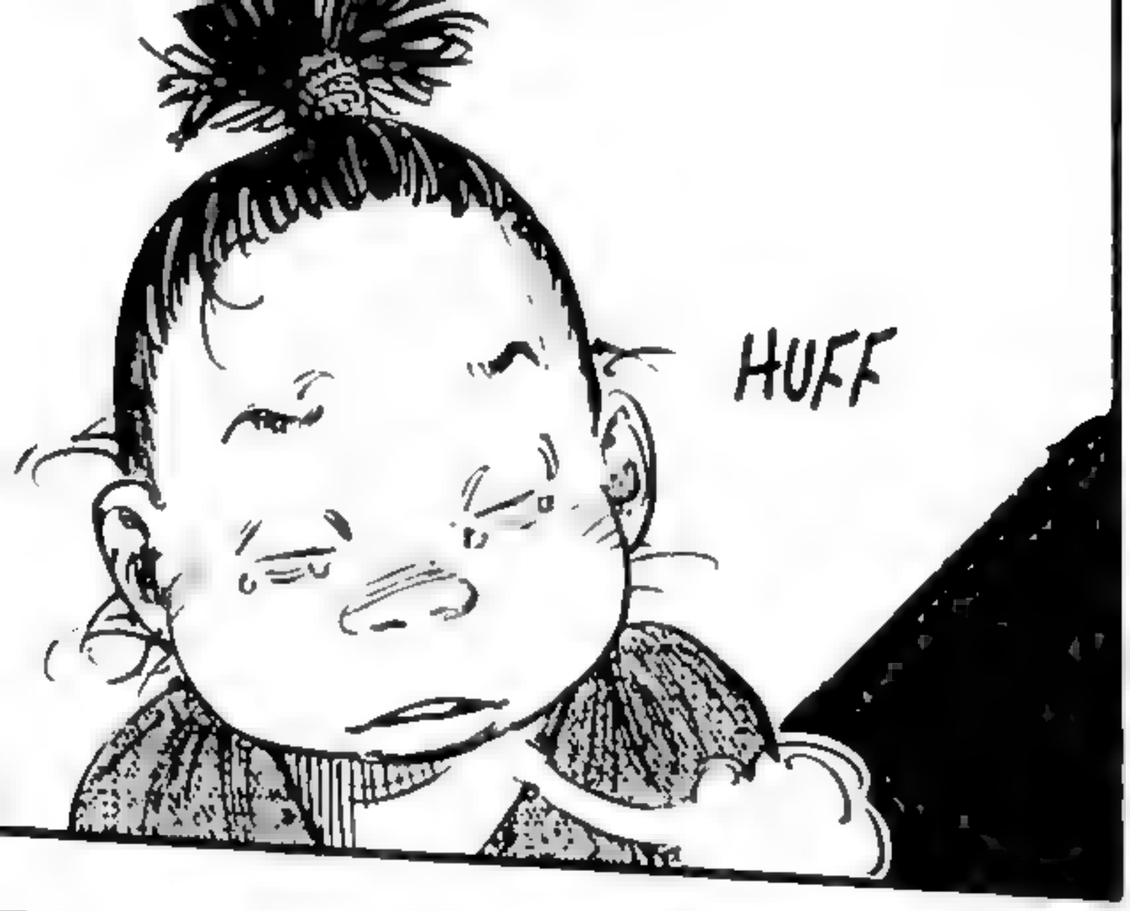
HMF!

HAAHH!

HAH!

YAH!




HUFF

I KNOW THAT.
THE DEAD DON'T COME BACK...

...

#307 | The Tip

BRUTE STRENGTH MAY BE ENOUGH TO BULLY SOMEONE AROUND.

BUT THAT'S NOT HOW YOU YIELD RICE AND WHEAT FROM THE SOIL.

JUST AS I THOUGHT, SAMURAI CAN'T FARM.

I HEARD THAT SOME SAMURAI'S BEEN WIELDING A HOE OVER AT IORI'S, SO I CAME TO SEE FOR MYSELF.

HE CAME TO MOCK ME?
WHAT WAS THAT?

...
HA HA HA

STOP PUTTING ME ON A PEDESTAL.
HMPH
I'M JUST TRAINING.
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M SERVING A CASTLE.
SAMURAI?

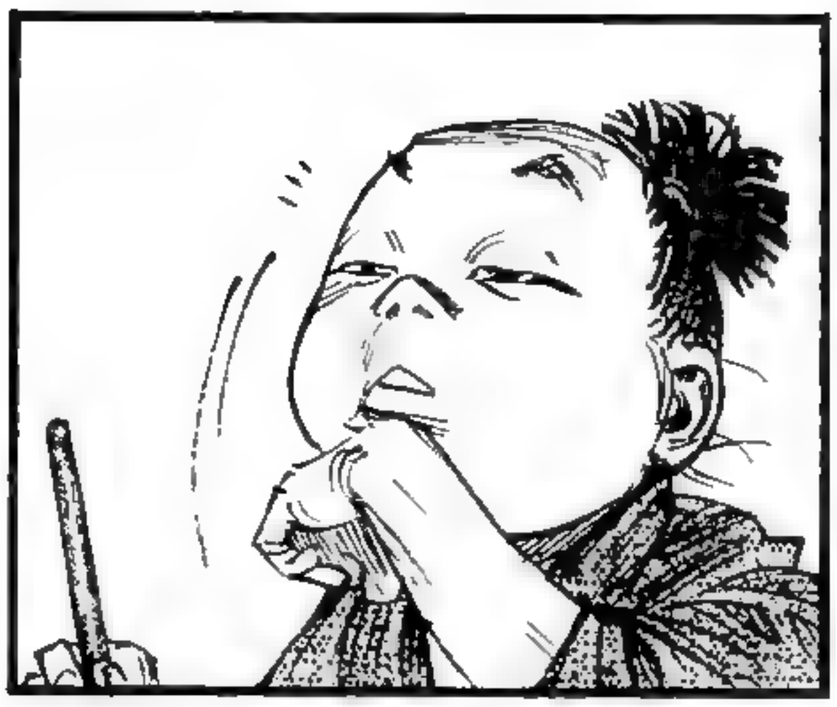
IS HE ONE OF THEM...?

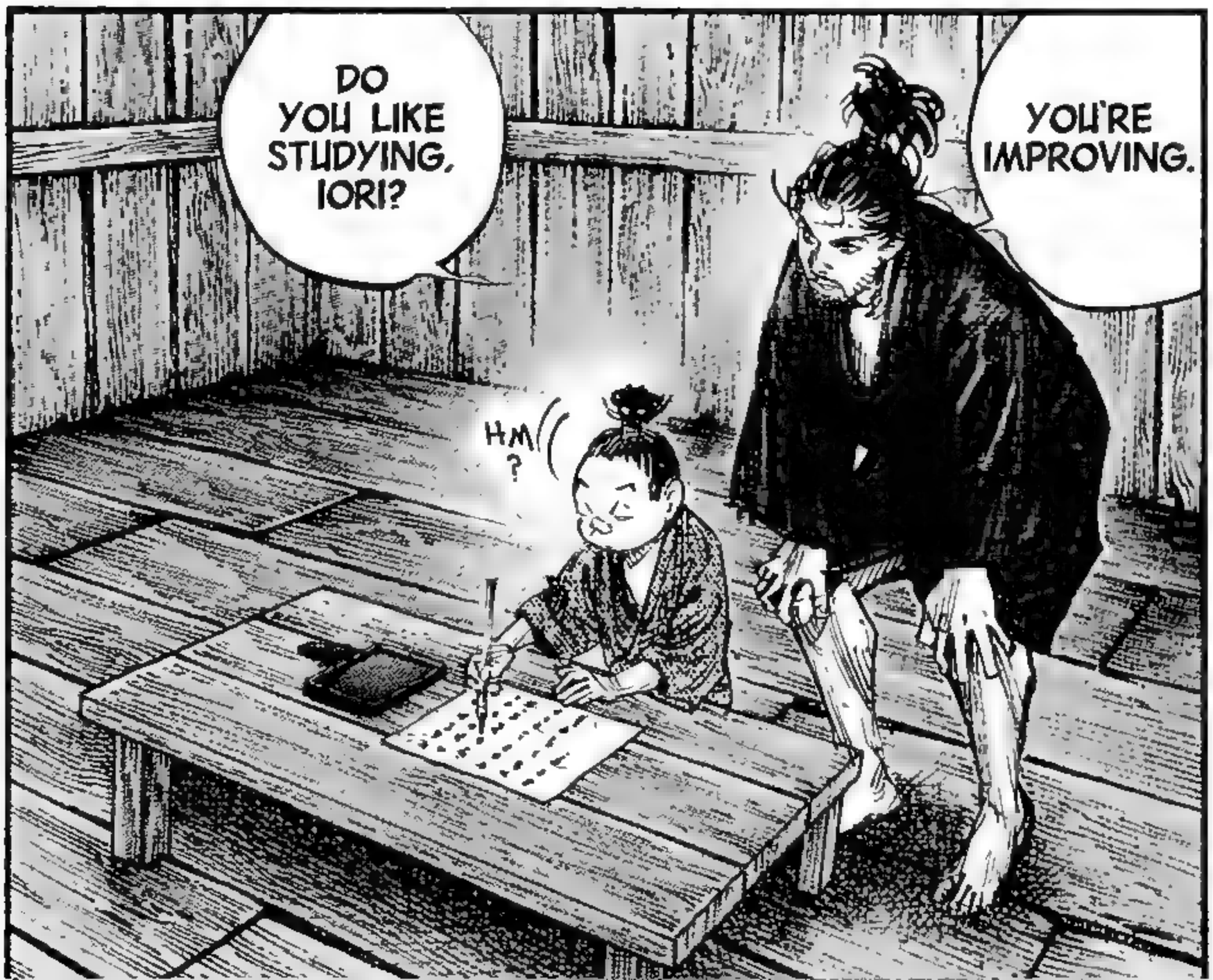
HE WASN'T WITH THOSE VILLAGERS WHEN THEY VISITED ME THOUGH.

BRUTE STRENGTH MAY BE ENOUGH TO BULLY SOMEONE AROUND...

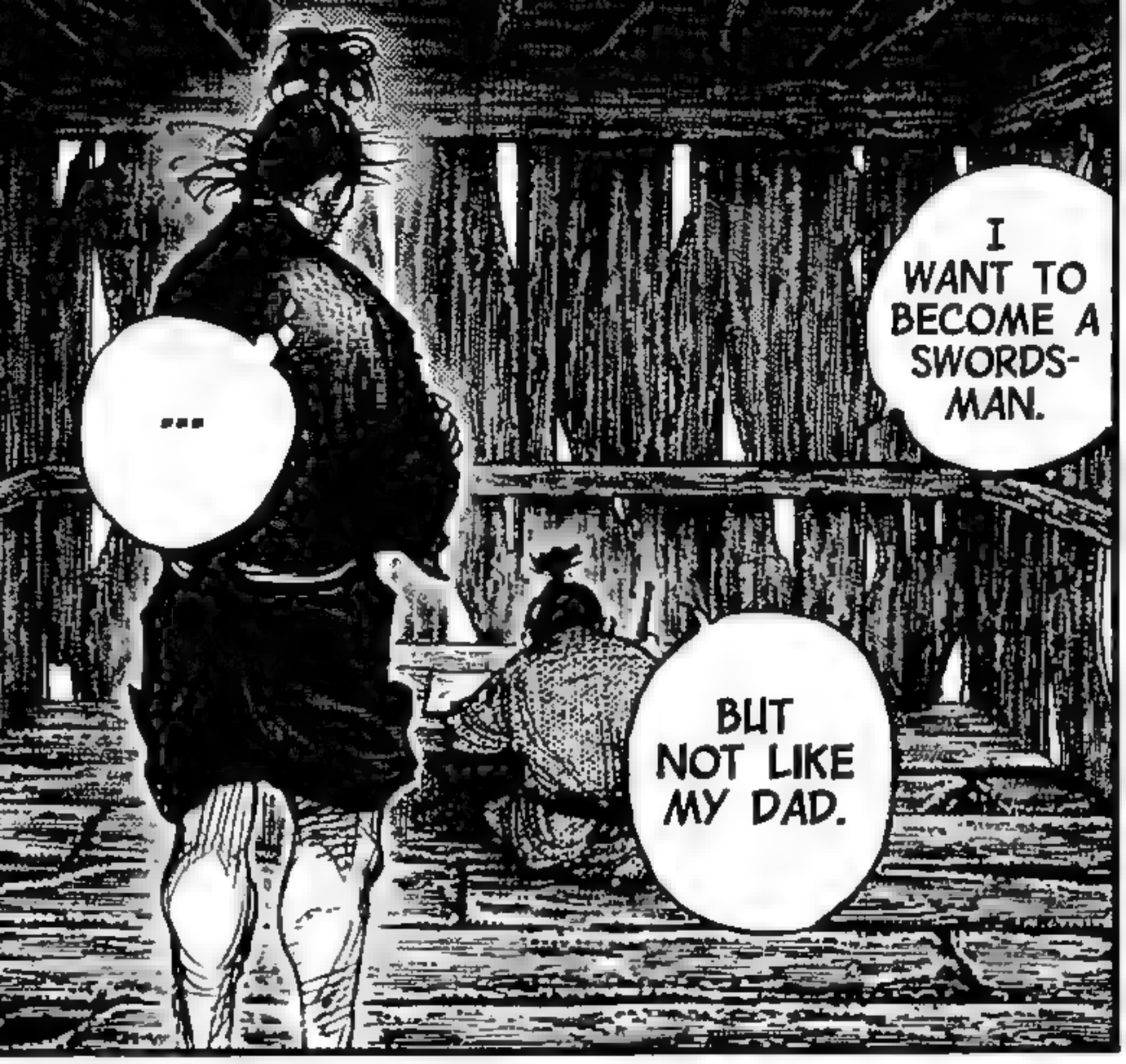
...

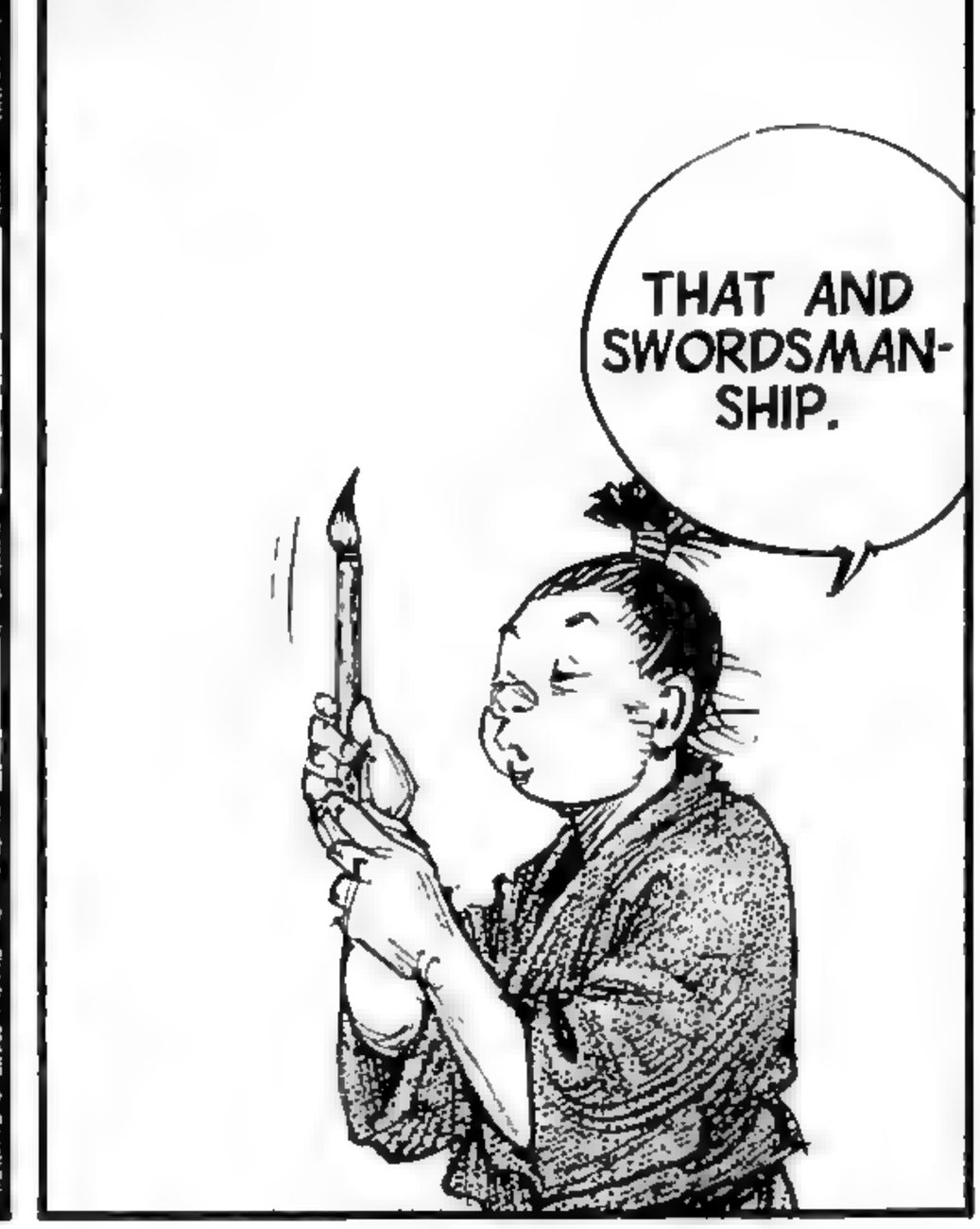
FICH




DO YOU LIKE STUDYING, IORI?
HM ?
YOU'RE IMPROVING.

HMM ...


...
I WANT TO BECOME A SWORDSMAN.
BUT NOT LIKE MY DAD.


THAT AND SWORDSMANSHIP.

IT'S THE SWORD THAT DOES THE KILLING.
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

WHAT SCHOOL ARE YOU FROM?
I DON'T KNOW.

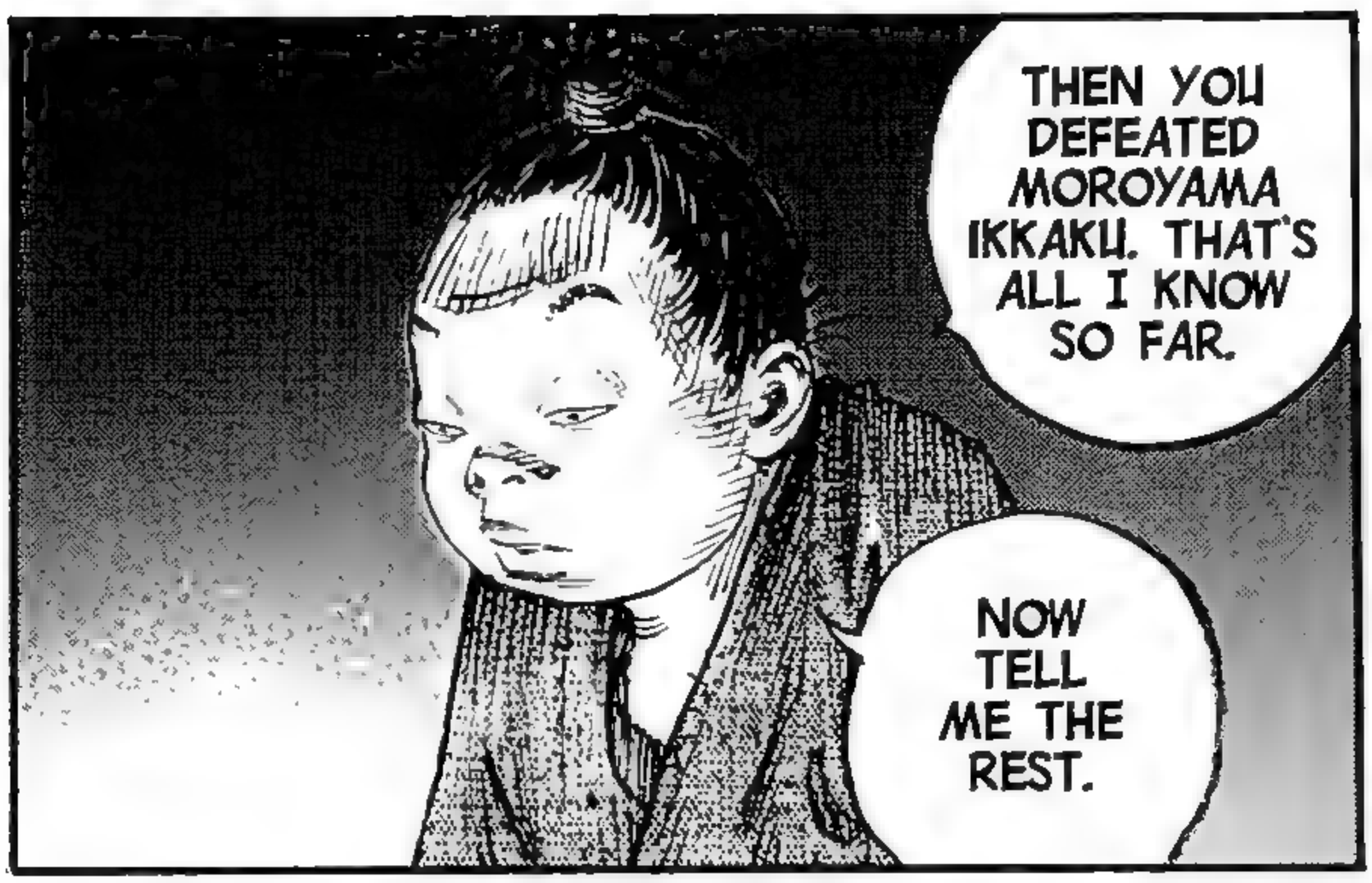
WHO WAS YOUR MASTER, TAKEZŌ?

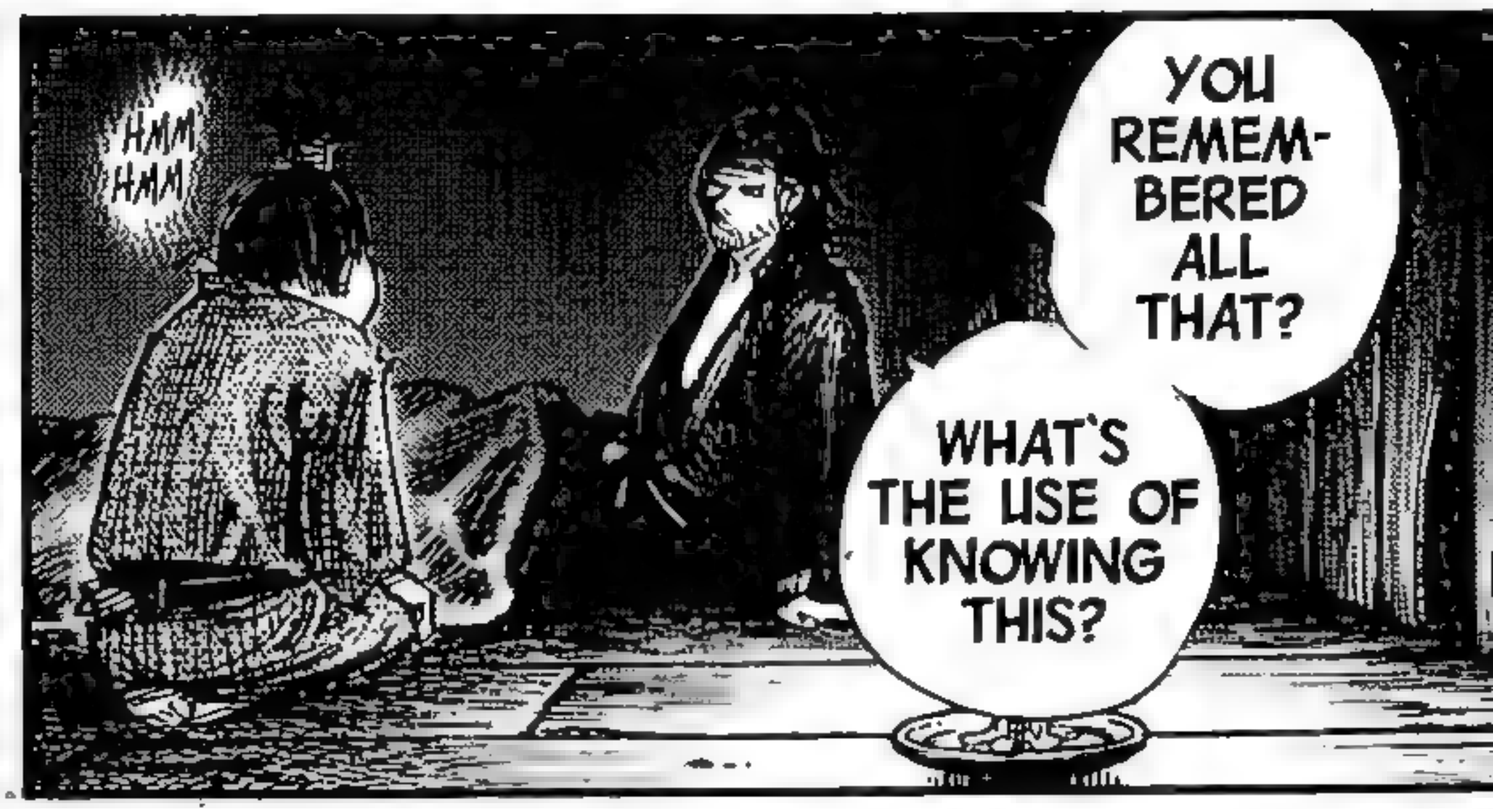
...

A PERSON'S NAME DOESN'T DO IT.

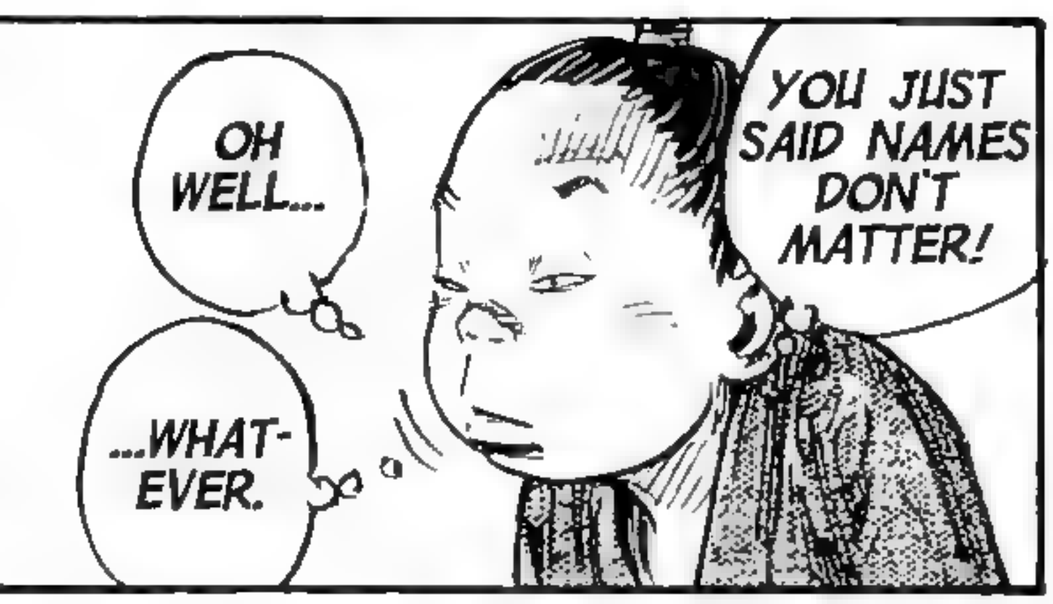
YOU WERE THIRTEEN AND THE FIRST PERSON YOU KILLED WAS...

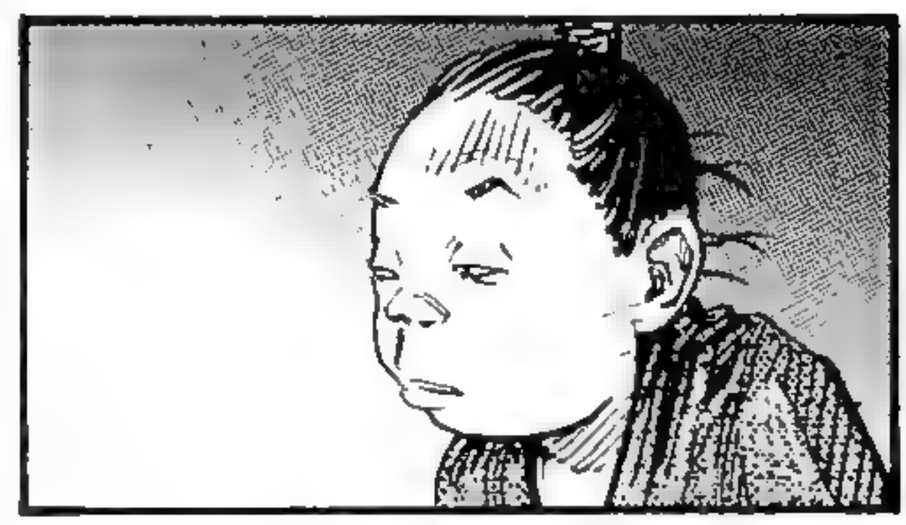
...ARIMA KIHEI.





I WENT TO THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL TO MAKE A NAME FOR MYSELF.


OH WELL...
YOU JUST SAID NAMES DON'T MATTER!
...WHAT-EVER.



I CAN STILL TURN BACK.

THEY'RE ALL DEAD.

?

WERE ALL THOSE FIGHTS REAL?

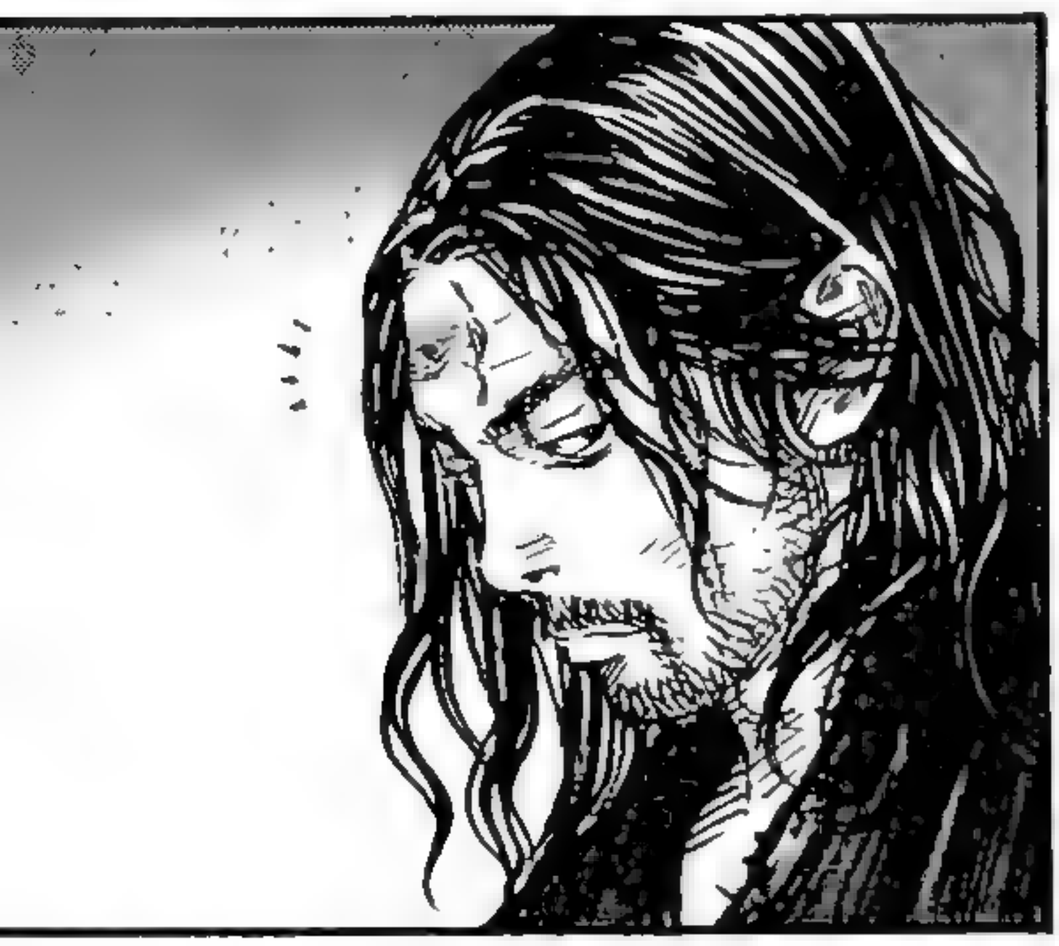
I'M STILL ALIVE.

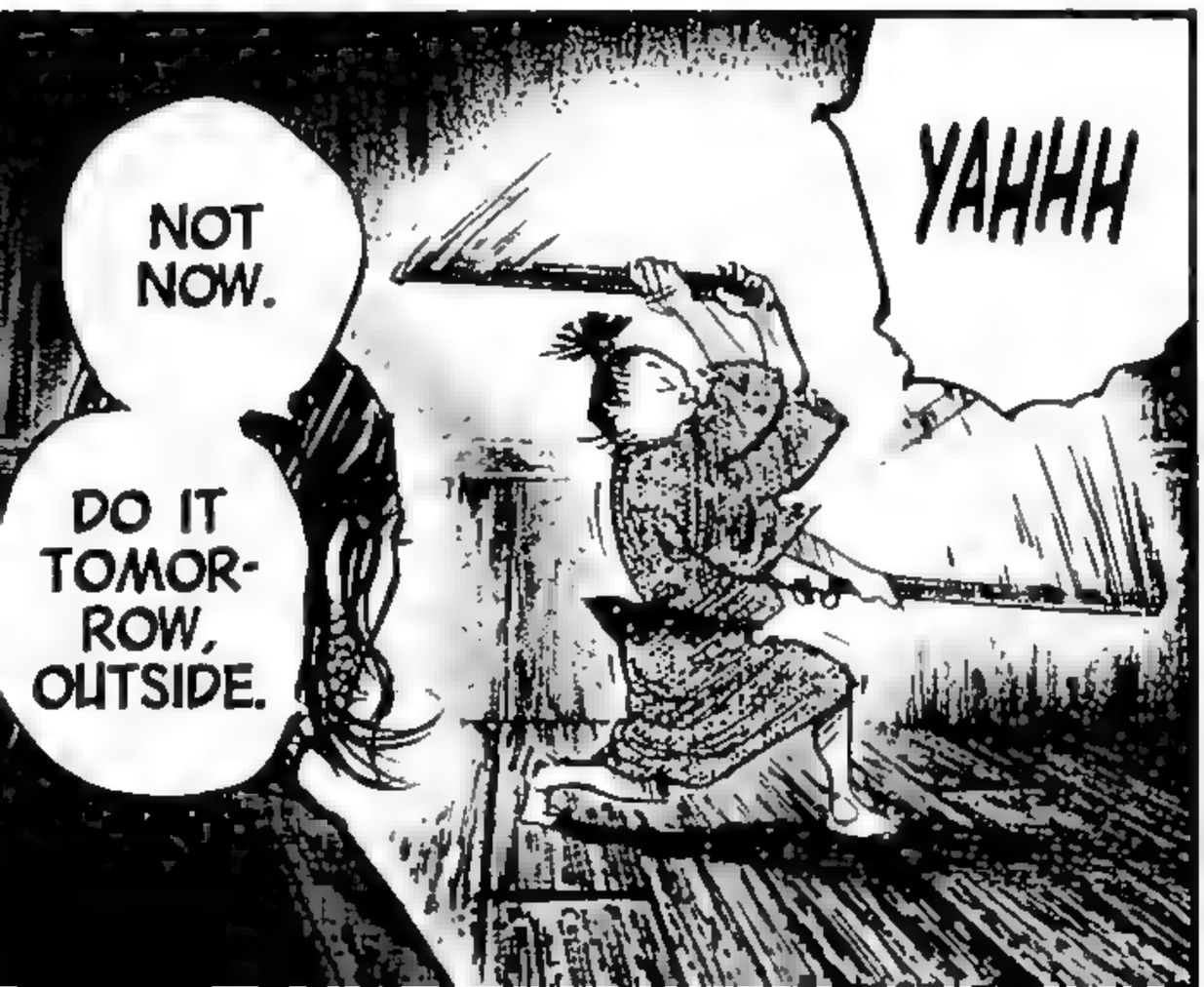
I SURVIVED, THEREFORE I WAS BETTER THAN THEM.

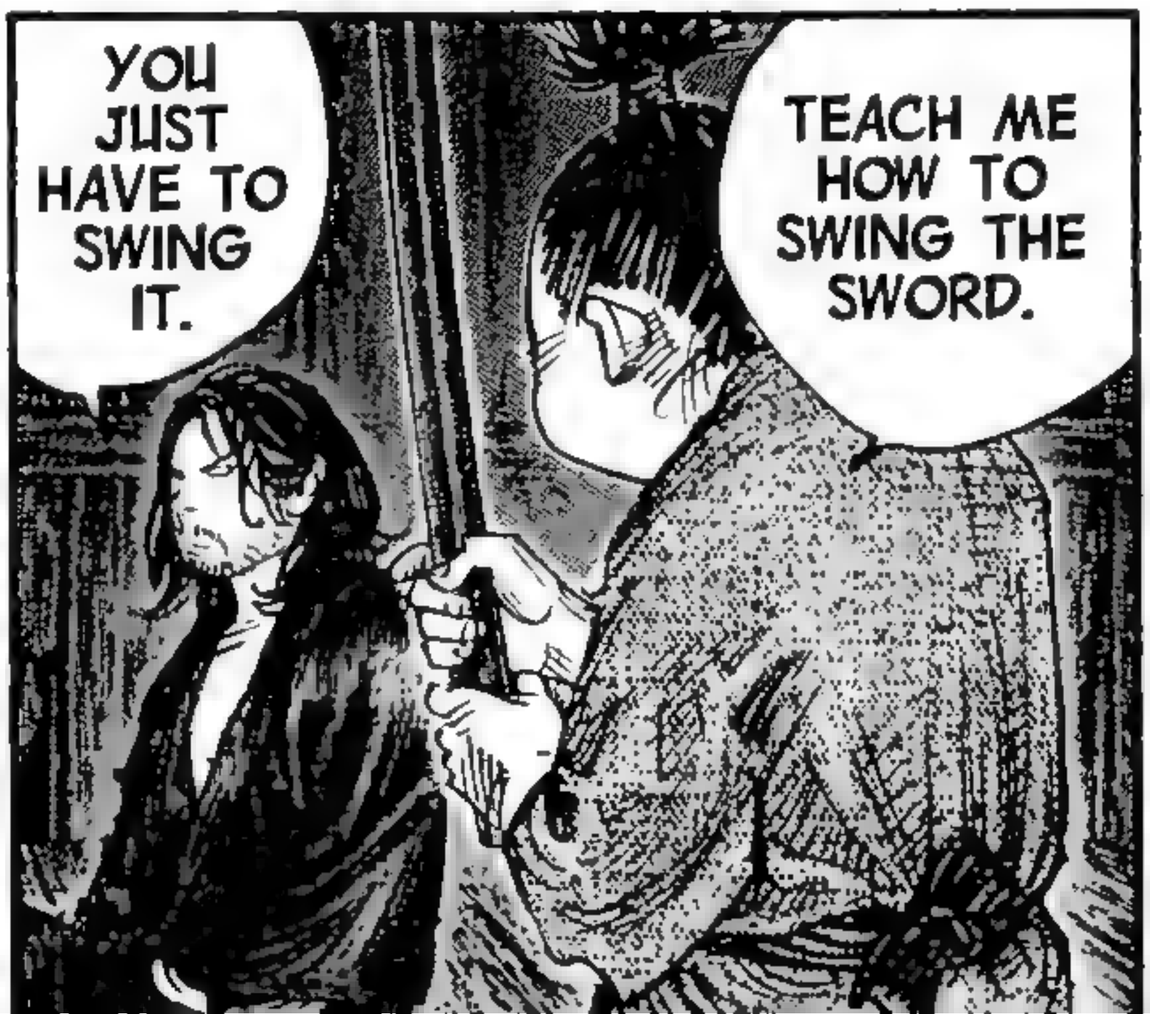
I KILLED THEM WITH THESE HANDS.

IT DID HAPPEN. IT WAS REAL.

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

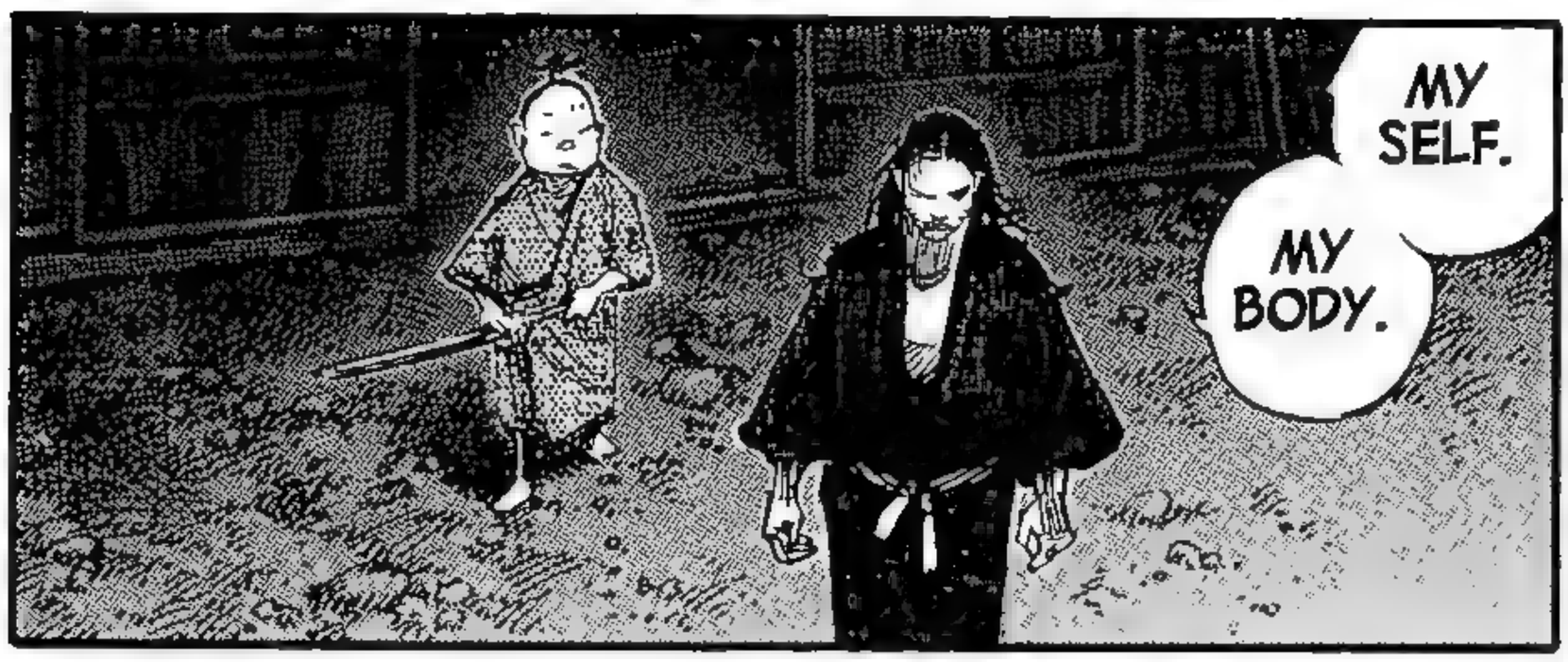






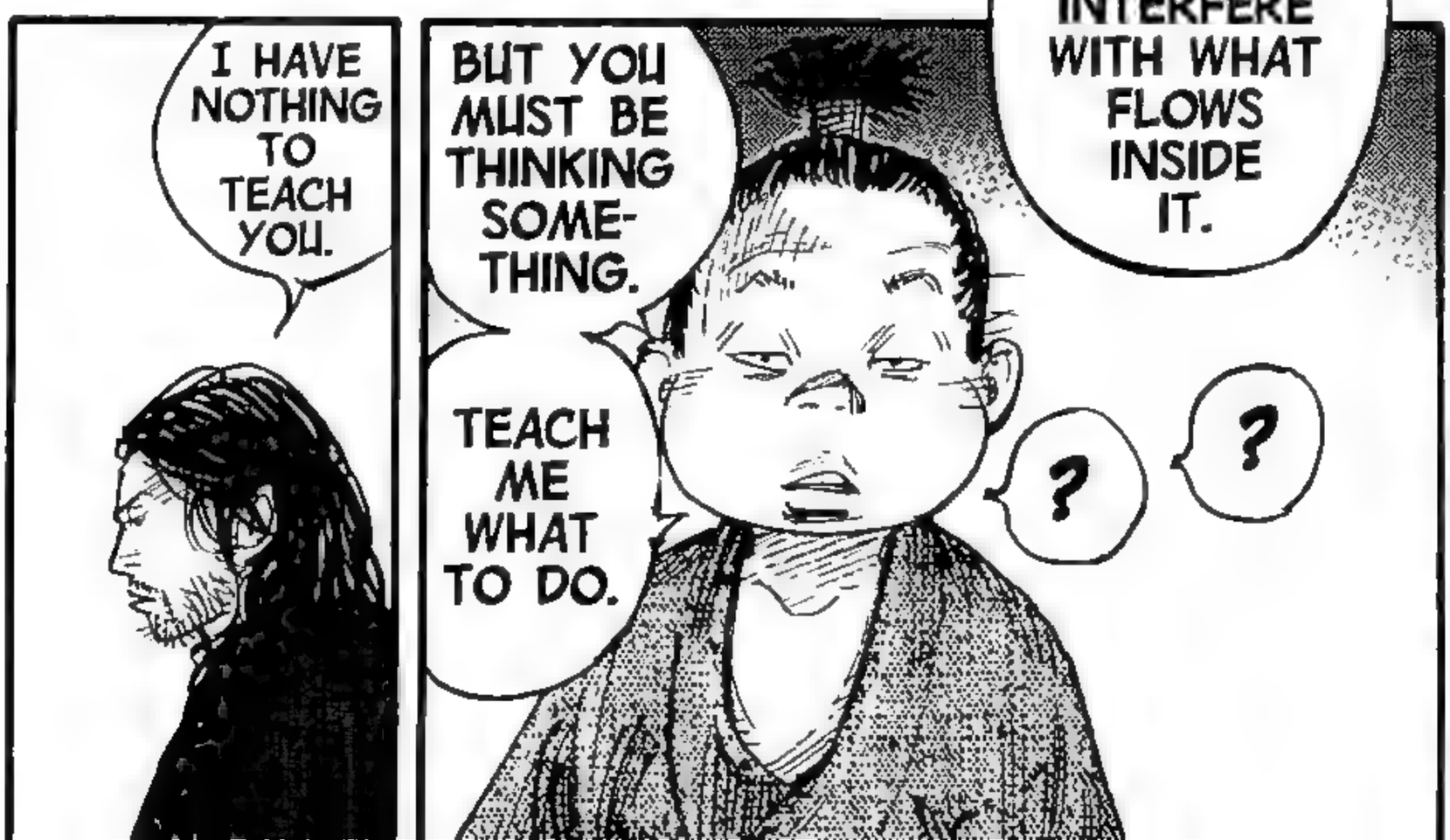
I'D BE DEAD IF I WAS THINKING ANYTHING.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF WHEN YOU'RE SWINGING THE SWORD?
HUF HUF


MY SELF.
MY BODY.

IT'S JUST A PIPE.
?
WHAT IS?

DON'T LET ANYTHING INTERFERE WITH WHAT FLOWS INSIDE IT.


I HAVE NOTHING TO TEACH YOU.
BUT YOU MUST BE THINKING SOME-THING.
TEACH ME WHAT TO DO.
?
?

THE BODY IS A VESSEL.
EMPTY IT OUT.

ASK THE SWORD.

DON'T BE A PART OF THE VESSEL...
...BE INSIDE THE EMPTINESS.

...
FWOOM

BE AT ONE WITH THE EMPTINESS.

HAH

FWOOSH

...

IORI...

YAHH!

YOU'RE AN ARM.

ARM?

YOU ARE NOT YOUR ARM.

?

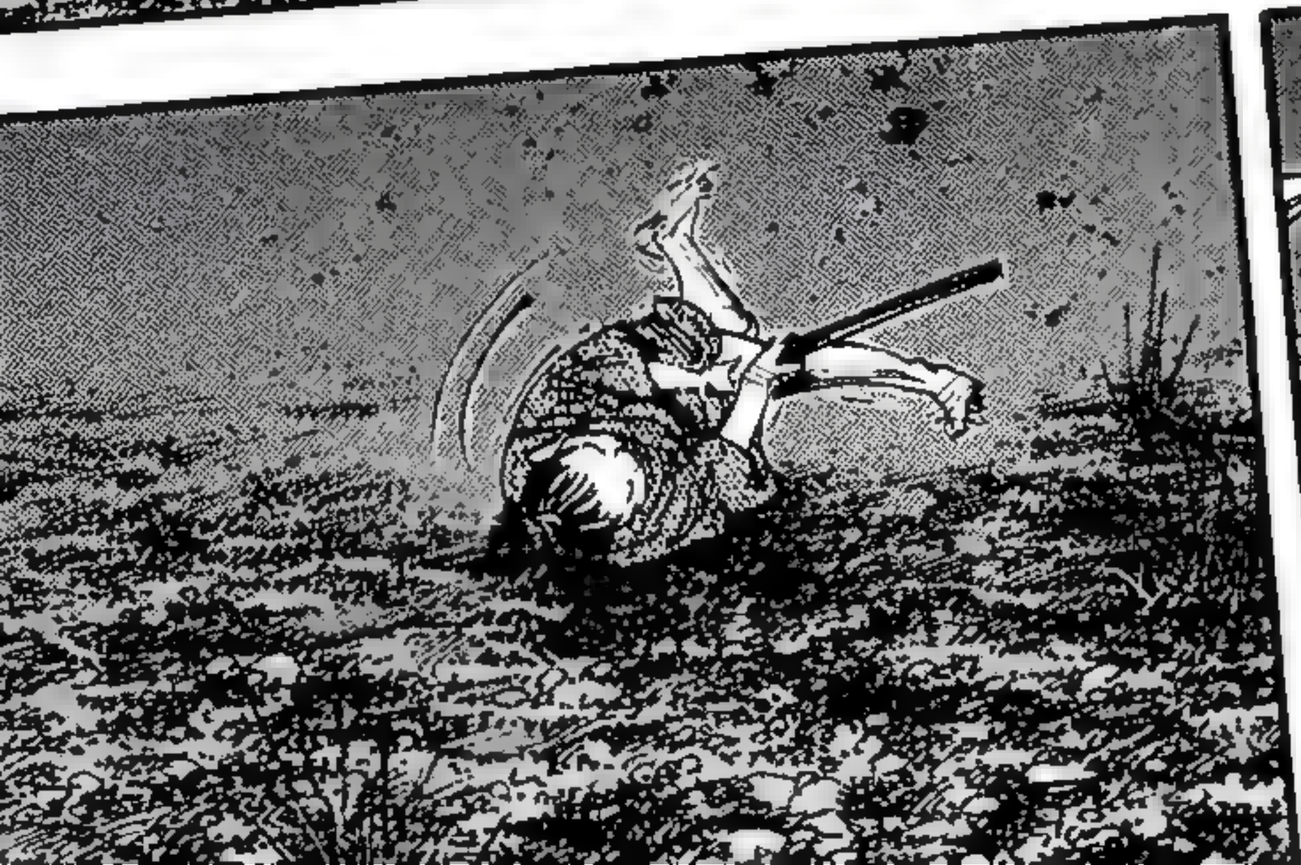
I TOLD YOU. YOU'RE JUST A VESSEL.
THE ARM IS NOTHING BUT...
HAH!
UMF!
?
...ITS TIP.
YAHH!
YAHH!

HUP.

!

!!

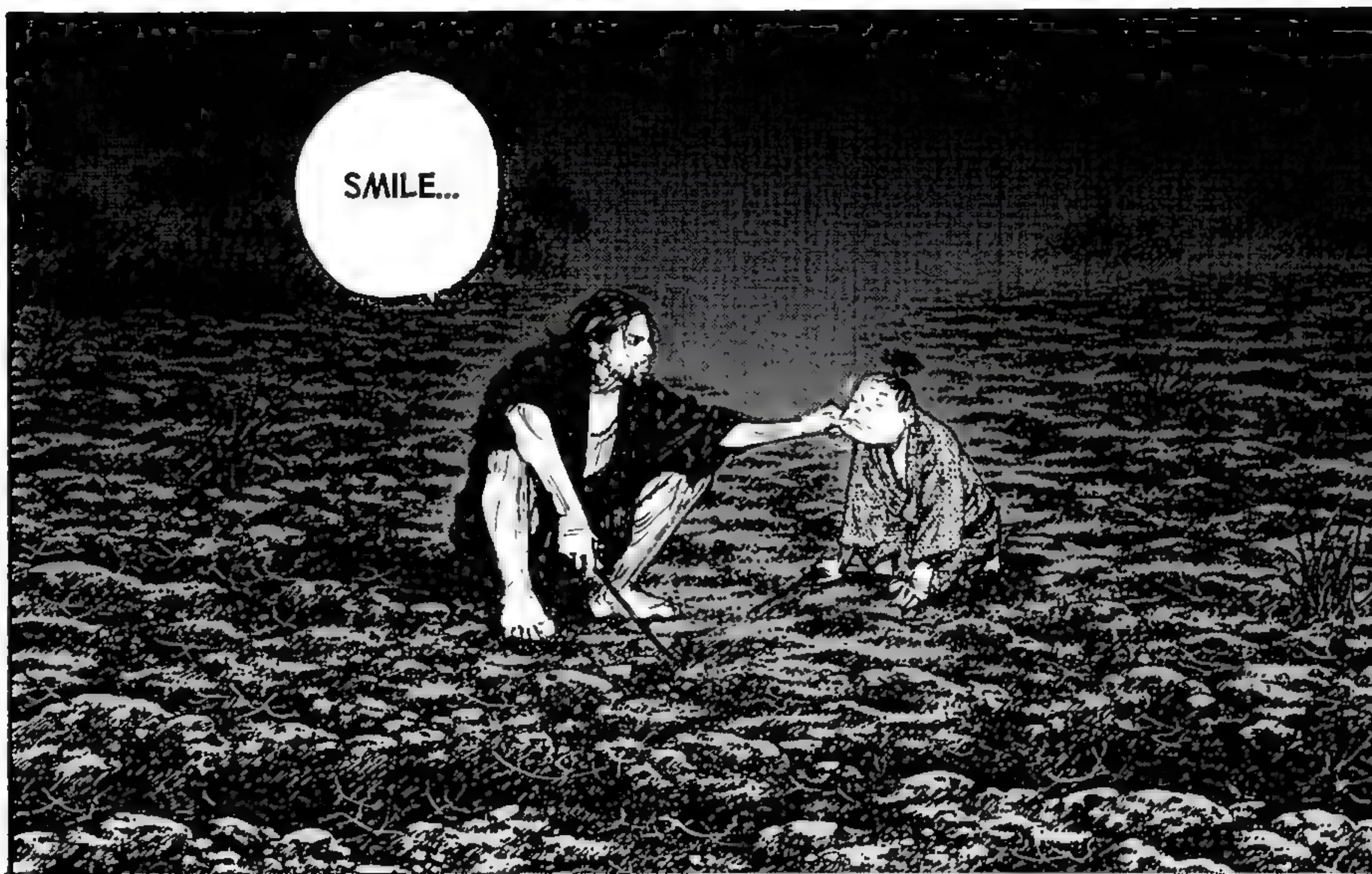
YAHH!



DON'T LOOK SO ANGRY, IORI.
IT'S BLINDING YOU FROM...

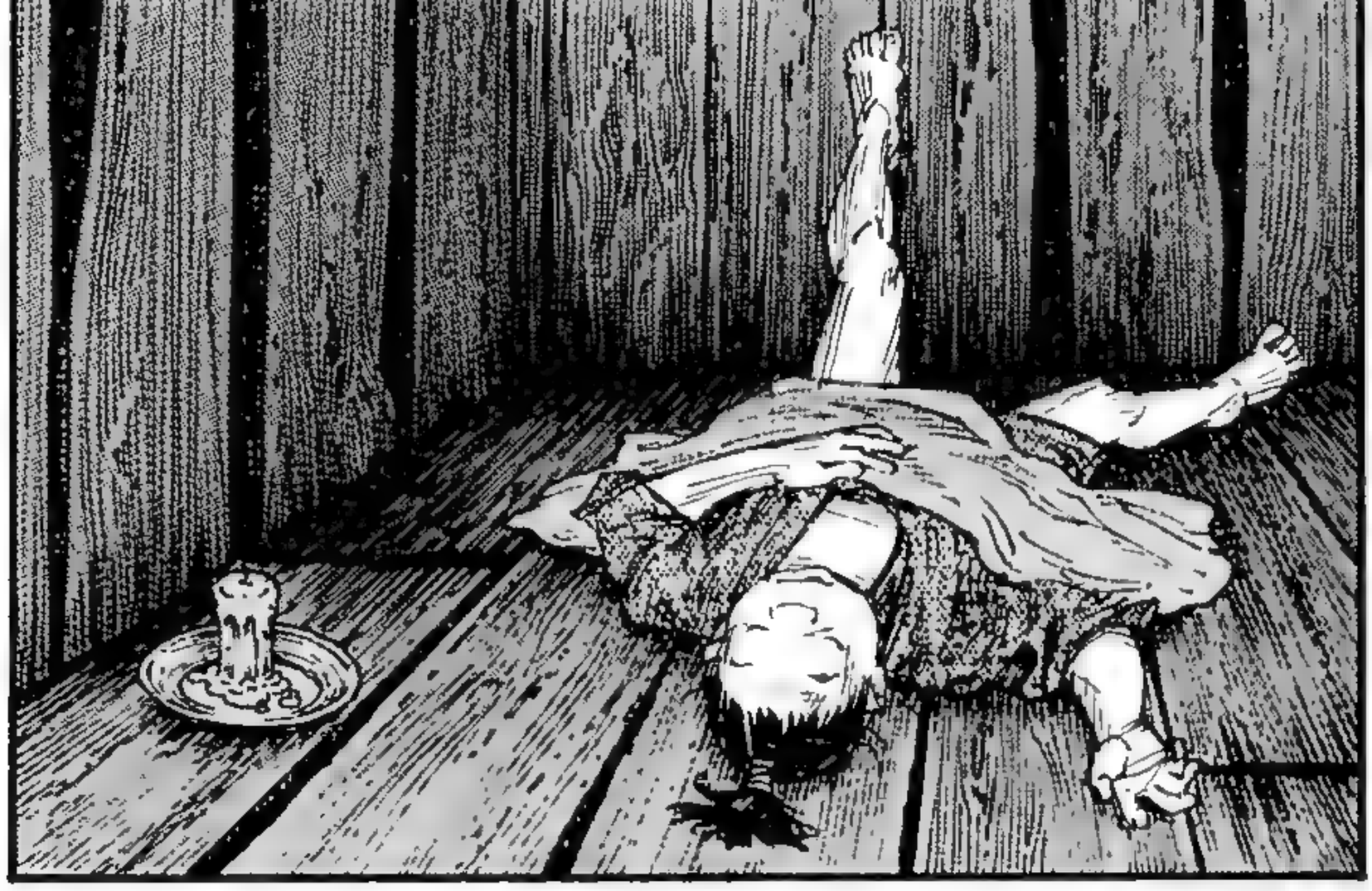
...

...WHO YOU REALLY ARE.
...YOUR SWORD.
...YOUR BODY.


SMILE...

...

WAIT...
THAT'S...



...WAIT... THAT'S...

THAT'S ME.

...THE EMPTINESS INSIDE ME OPENS UP...

FOLLOW-ING THE FLOW OF WHATEVER IS INSIDE ME...
NOT BLOCKED BY MY OWN BODY...

...SO MUCH SO IT MAKES ME WANT TO LAUGH.
...SPREADING BOTH INWARD AND OUTWARD...
HARDLY EVER WHEN I FOUGHT SOMEONE.
HOW MANY TIMES DID THAT HAPPEN?
MOSTLY WHEN I WAS ALONE.
FIGHT...
I'M MURASAME TOGAME...

I'M SHINMEN TAKEZŌ.
I'M FOURTEEN.

...OF THE DAIGENRYŪ STYLE.

HEH HEH
JUST A KID.
FOURTEEN?

KRIK
KRIK

...!

...

SEIZE THE SITUATION...

CONTROL THE DISTANCE.
SEIZE THE ADVANTAGE...

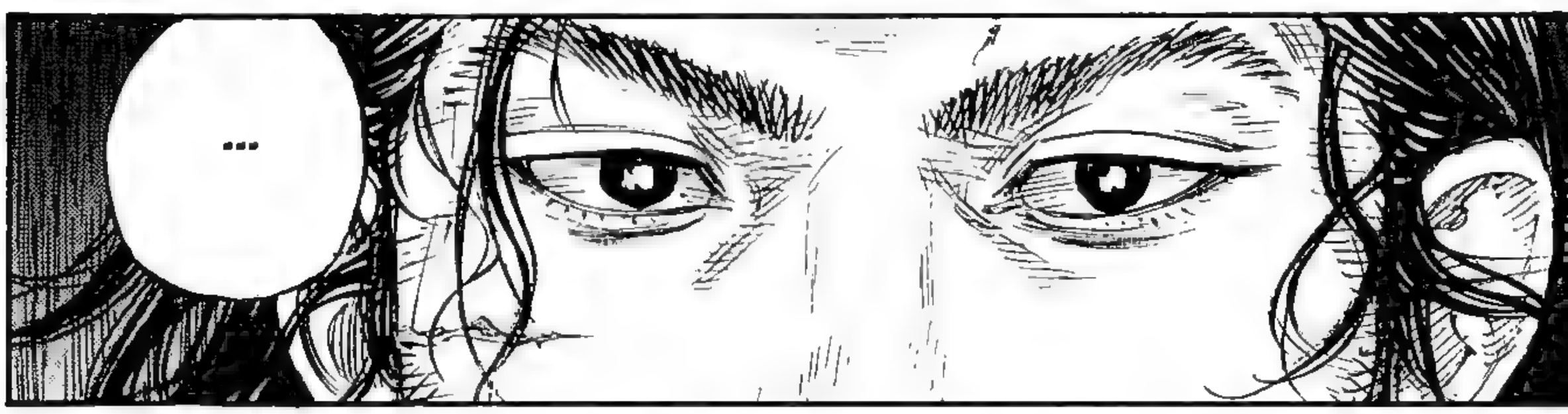
EVEN IF IT'S NOT TRUE.
SHOW HOW MUCH MORE MIGHTY YOU ARE THAN YOUR OPPONENT.

...IN THAT BRIEF MOMENT...

AS LONG AS IT SEEMS THAT WAY...

...BETWEEN ME AND MY OPPONENT.

THWOK
I LIED.

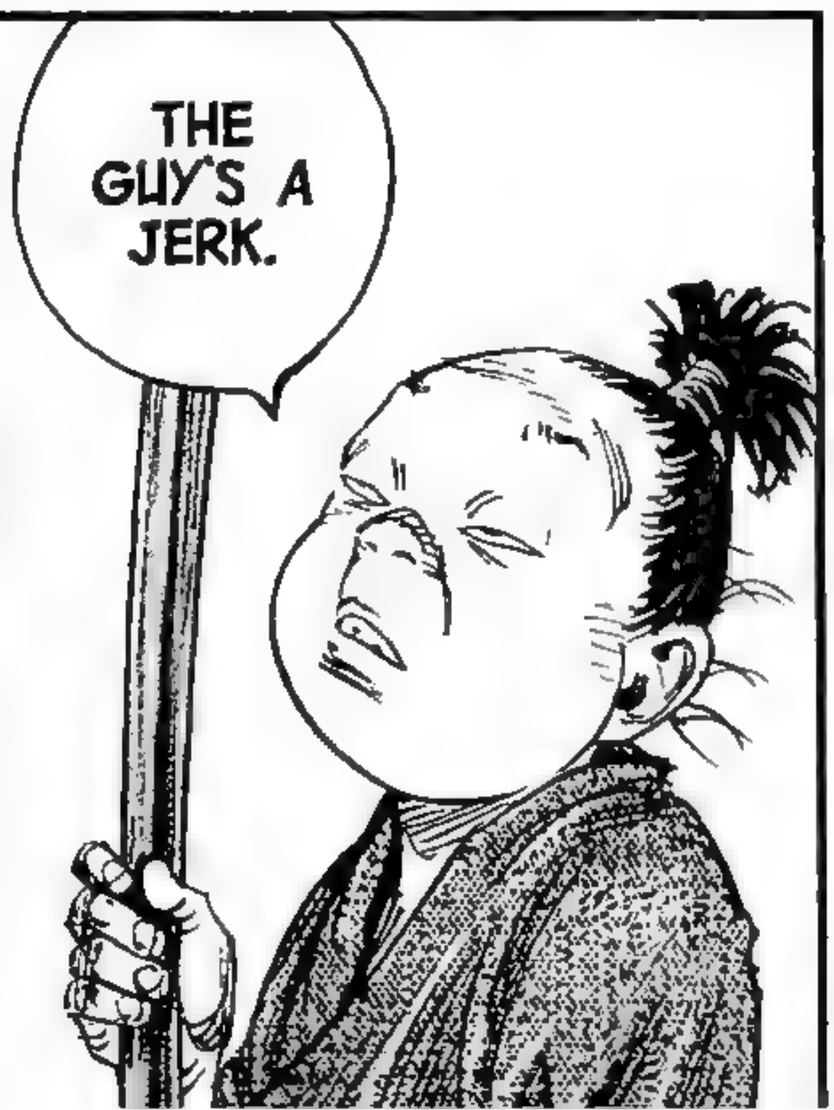

...

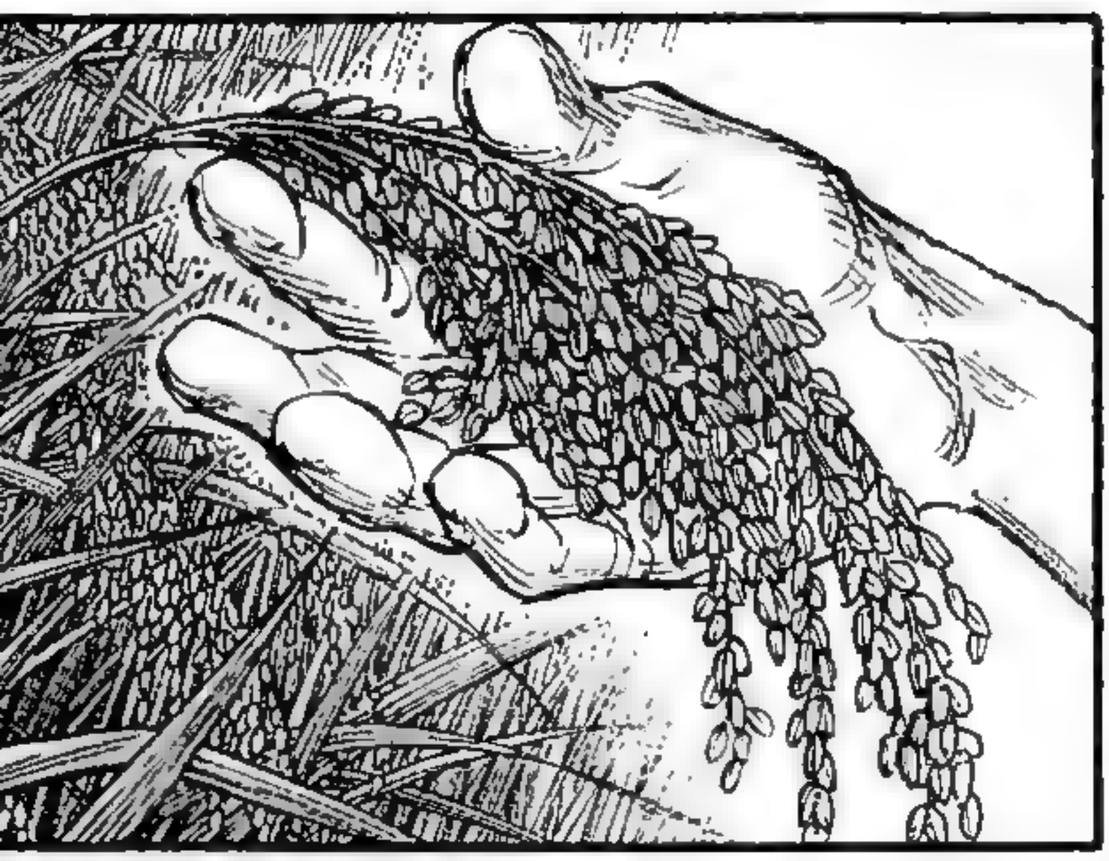
MAYBE I WAS JUST A GOOD BRAWLER.
SCHNORR

WHY DON'T I SEE ANY RICE PADDIES IN THIS VILLAGE?

HMF.

DOESN'T ANYONE GROW RICE AROUND HERE?





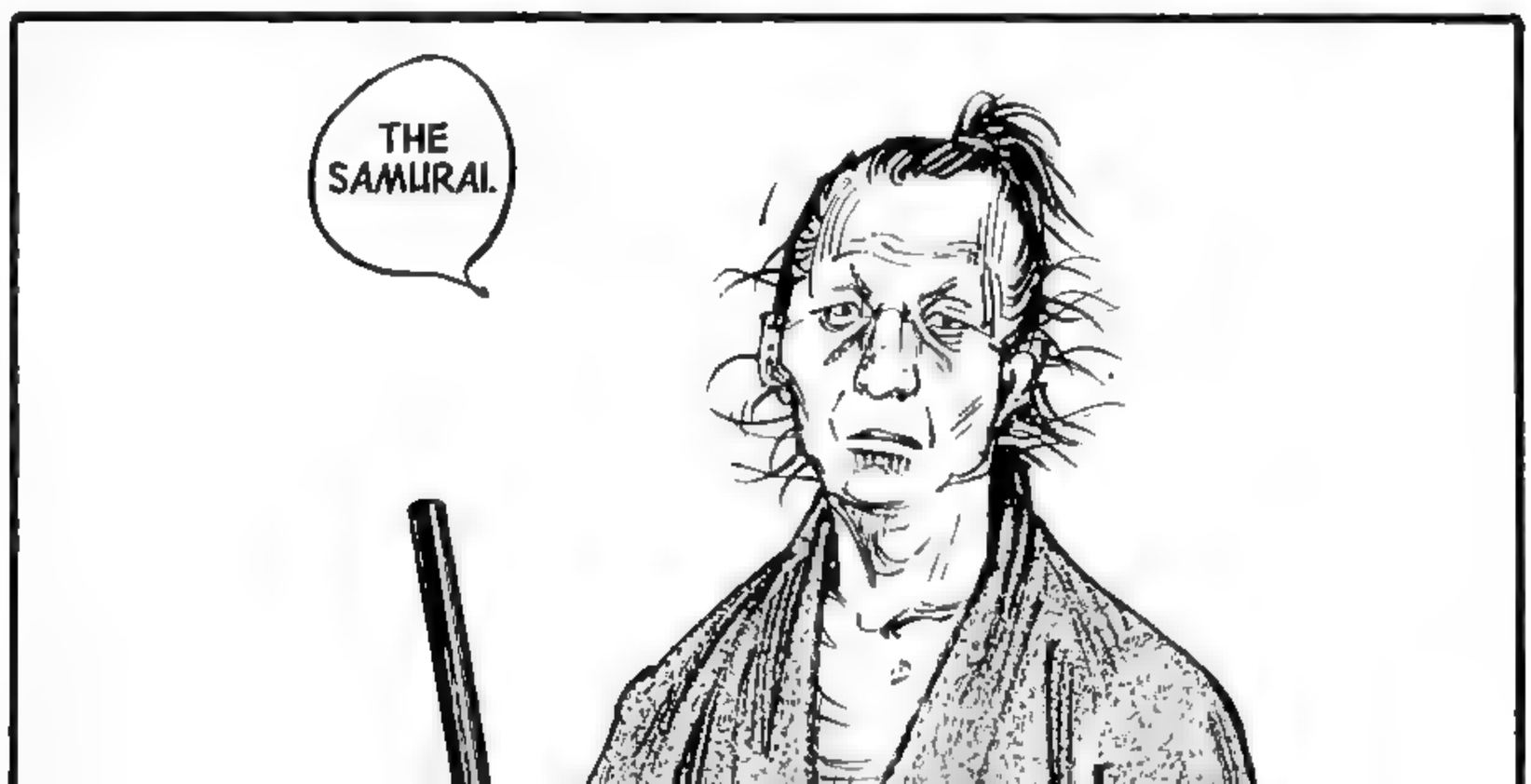
WOW!

YOU...

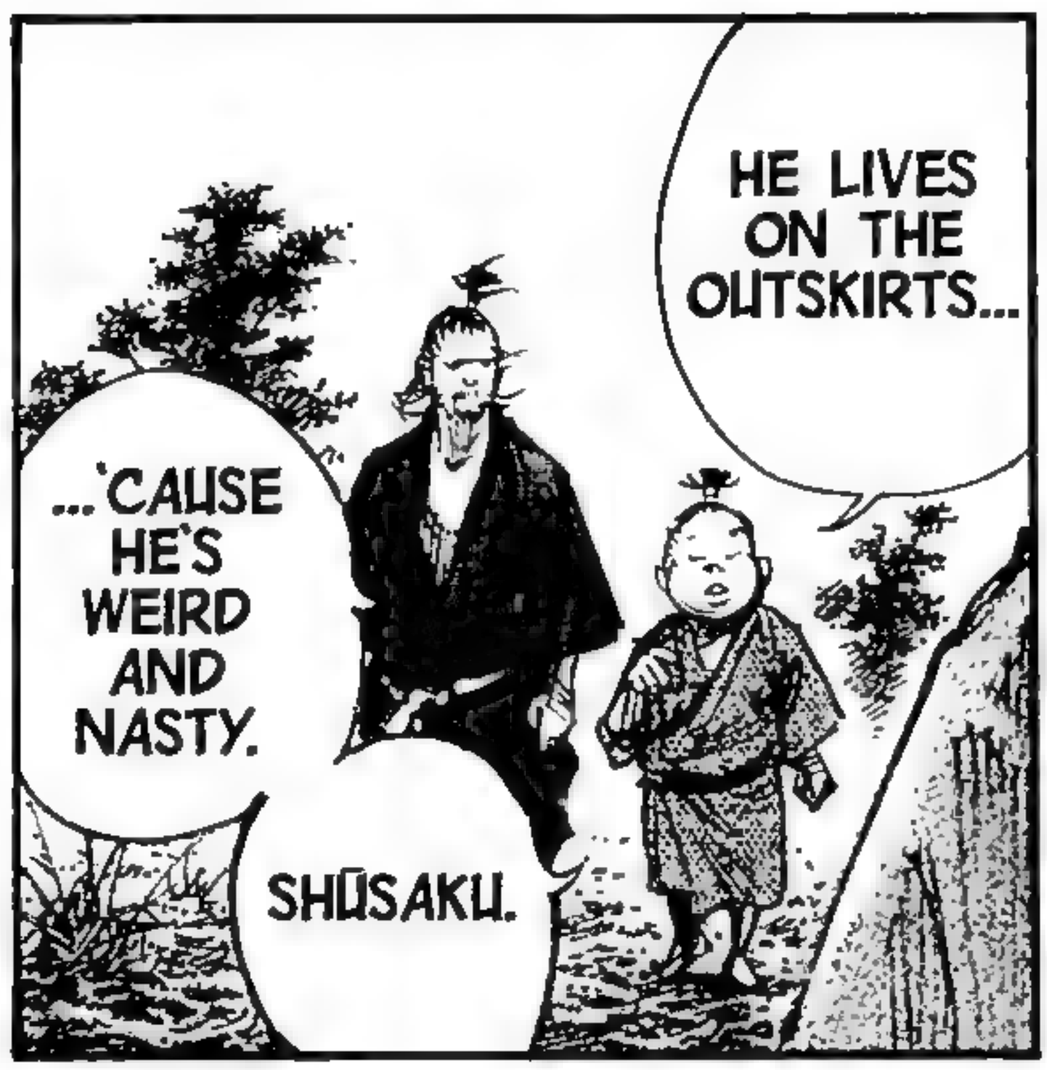
!

BAMM
IMPRES-SIVE.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?


THE SAMURAI.

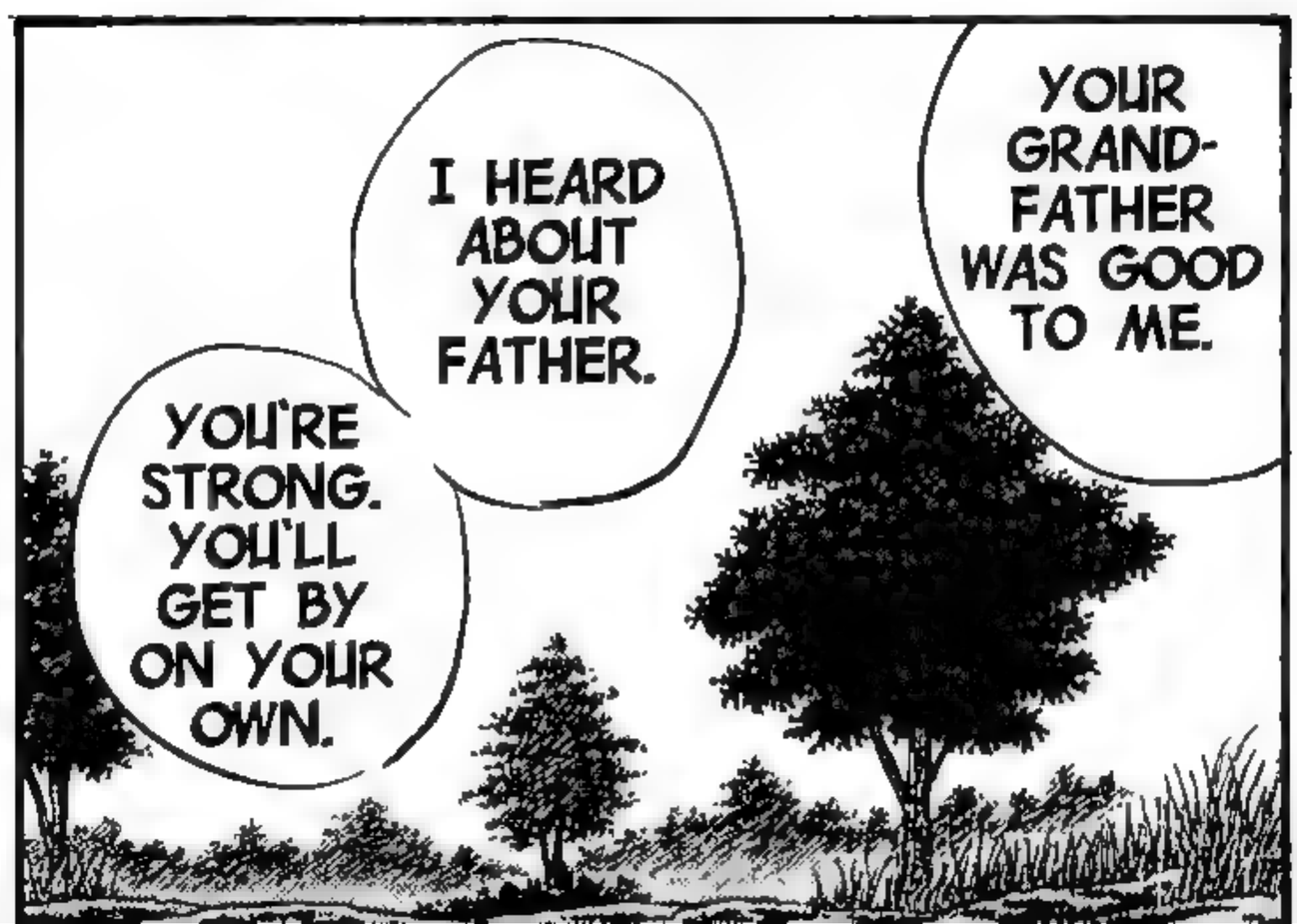
THIS JERK WAS ALWAYS NASTY TO MY DAD.


HE LIVES ON THE OUTSKIRTS...
...'CAUSE HE'S WEIRD AND NASTY.
SHŪSAKU.

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ONE OF THOSE BANDITS AFTER MY RICE.
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

I'LL SHARE SOME OF MY CROPS WITH YOU THEN.
IORI...
IT'S ALMOST HARVEST TIME.

ADDRESS ME PROPERLY, YOU BRAT.


I HEARD ABOUT YOUR FATHER.
YOUR GRAND-FATHER WAS GOOD TO ME.
YOU'RE STRONG. YOU'LL GET BY ON YOUR OWN.

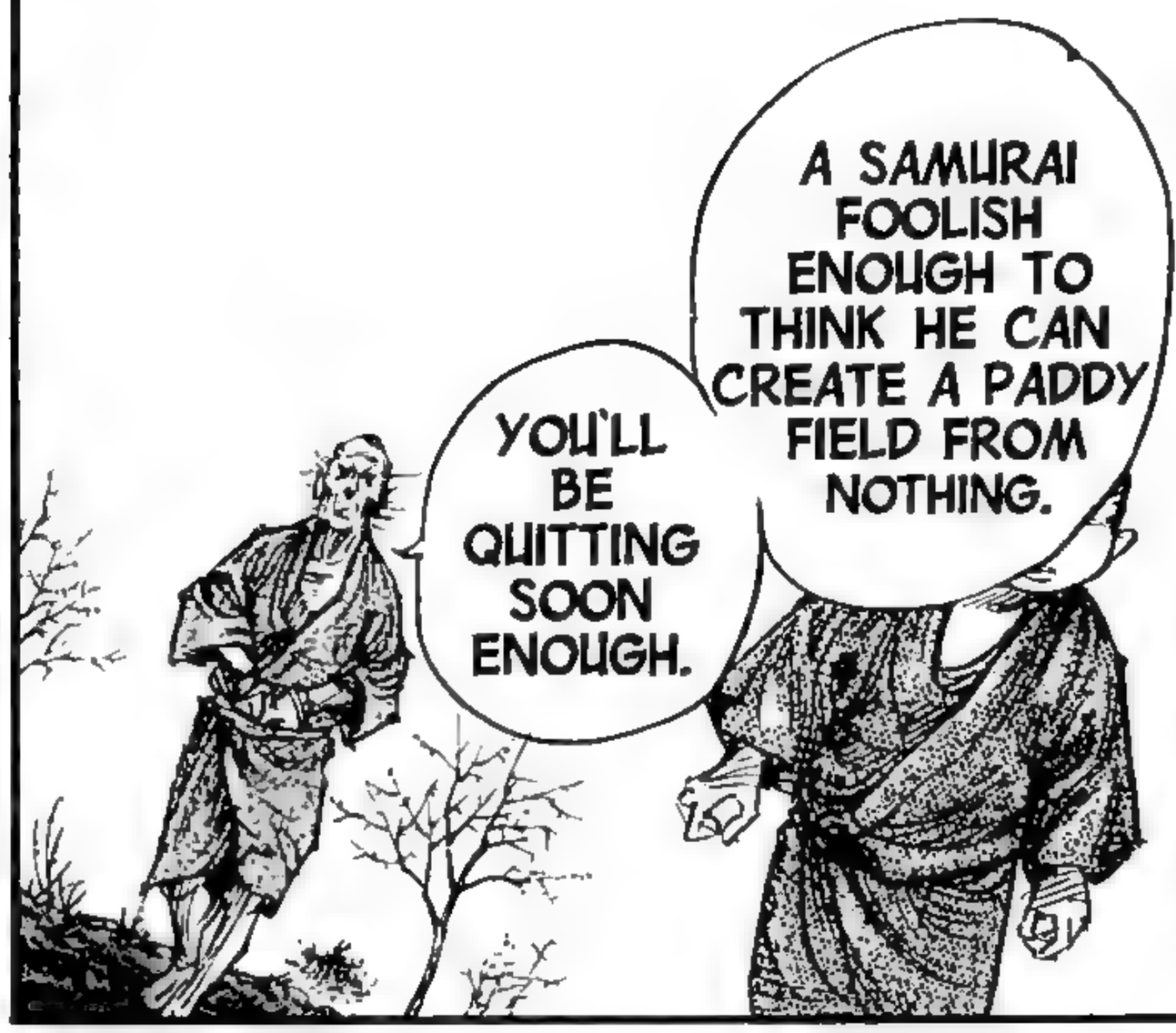
HE BRINGS RICE TO US EVERY YEAR.

HMPH
HM... HE PROBABLY SAVED UP AS MUCH AS HE COULD SO YOU COULD GET BY.
UNLIKE YOUR FATHER, HE WAS ALWAYS LOOKING AFTER YOU.
I EXCHANGED MY GRANDPA'S POUCH FOR FOOD.
SHŪSAKU-SAN?
COULD YOU SHARE SOME OF YOUR SEEDS?
HMPH
NOPE.

THEY SAY THEY DON'T WANT TO JOIN YOU OVER THERE.

WHAT A FOOL TO LEAVE BEHIND HIS SON LIKE THIS.
...AND DIE.
...THAT CATCH ODD DISEASES...
NOW I'M THE ONLY STRANGE ONE LEFT HERE...
FICH
WELL... I GUESS THERE'S ONE MORE.

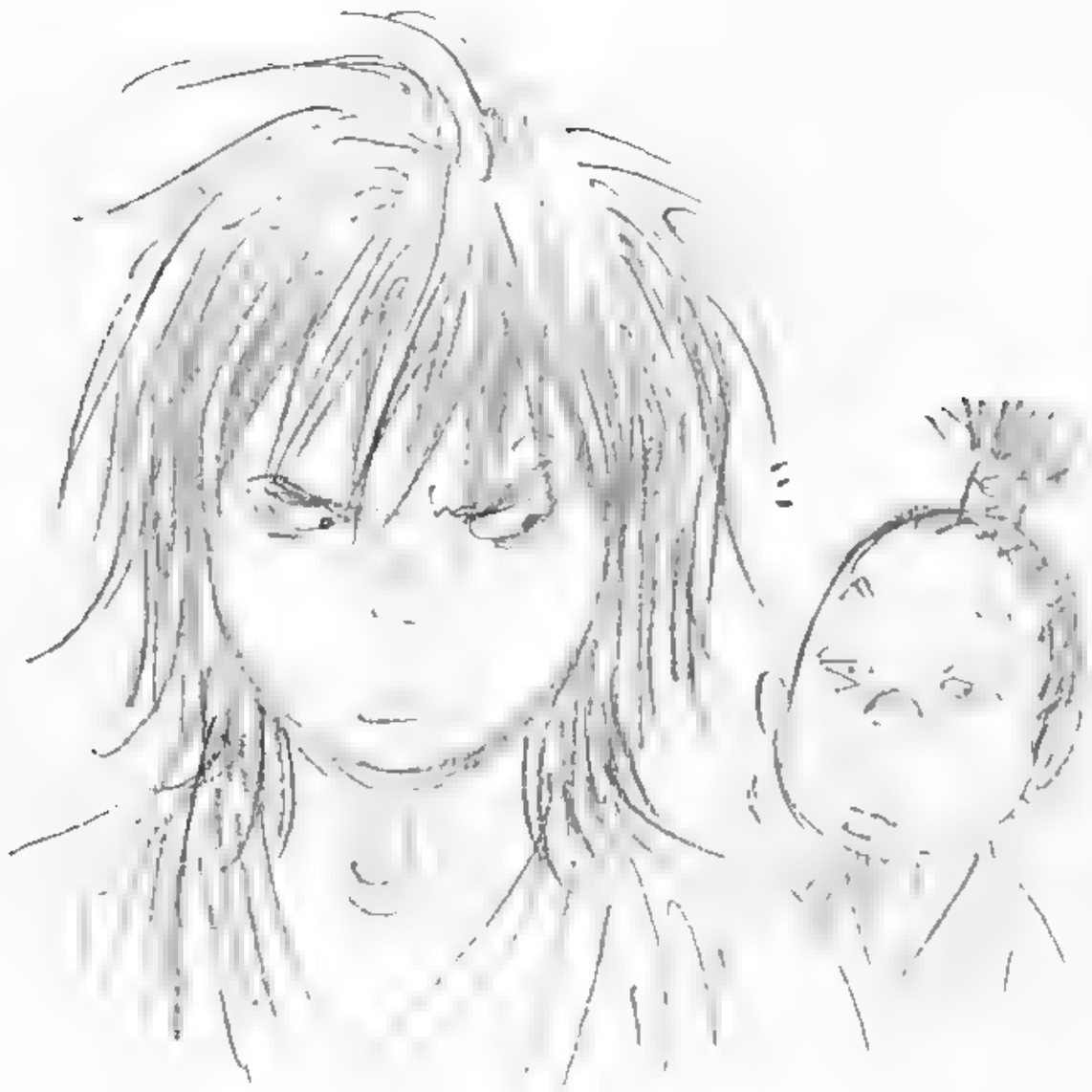
YOU THINK YOU'RE SUPERIOR BECAUSE YOU CAN BULLY PEOPLE AROUND?


YOU'LL BE QUITTING SOON ENOUGH.
A SAMURAI FOOLISH ENOUGH TO THINK HE CAN CREATE A PADDY FIELD FROM NOTHING.

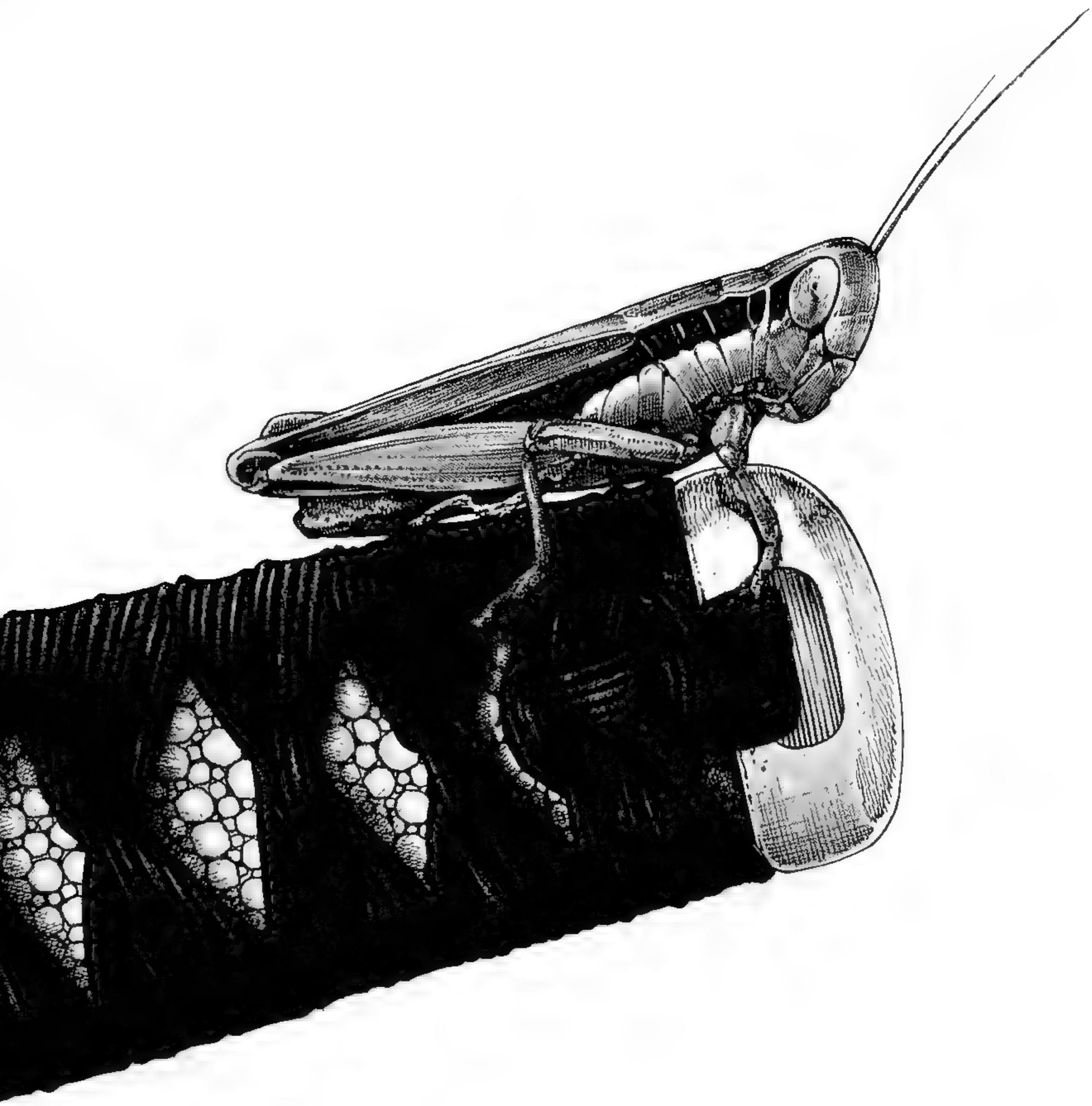
HE'S HUFFING AND PUFFING.
AH-HAH.

FICH

LIKE HE'S IN A FIGHT.



#308 | Locust

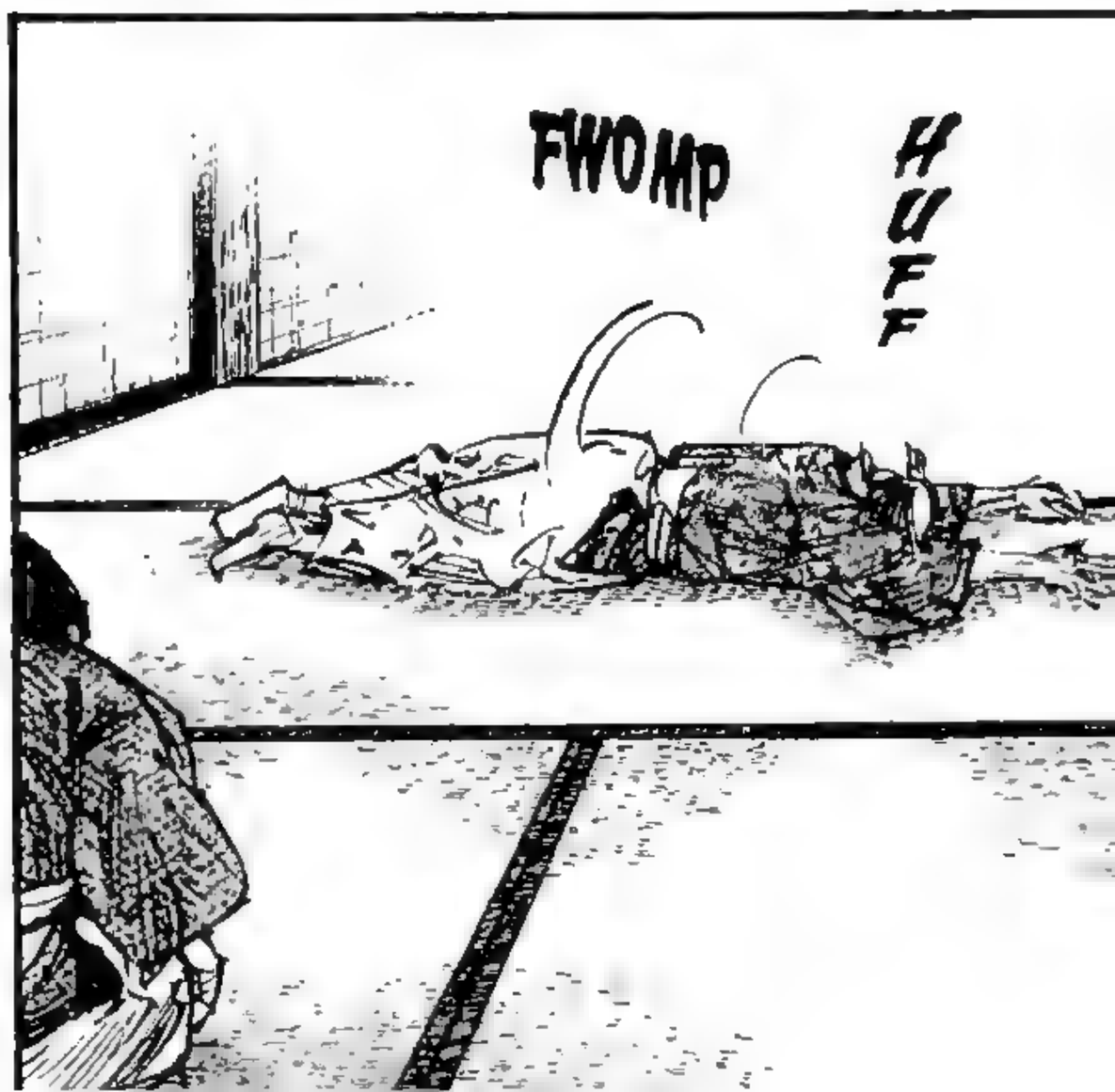


YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE TOO HOSPITABLE... JUST LEAVE ME BE.

THANK YOU, CHIEF PRIEST.
PLEASE...
SADO NO KAMI SIR, YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM YOUR TRIP.

YES, SIR.

ANY NEWS, TOYO-ZAEMON?


FWOMP
HUFF

HAVE YOU FOUND MUSASHI?

...OUR LORD WILL LOSE HIS PATIENCE.

IF YOU DON'T BRING HIM BACK TO KOKURA SOON...

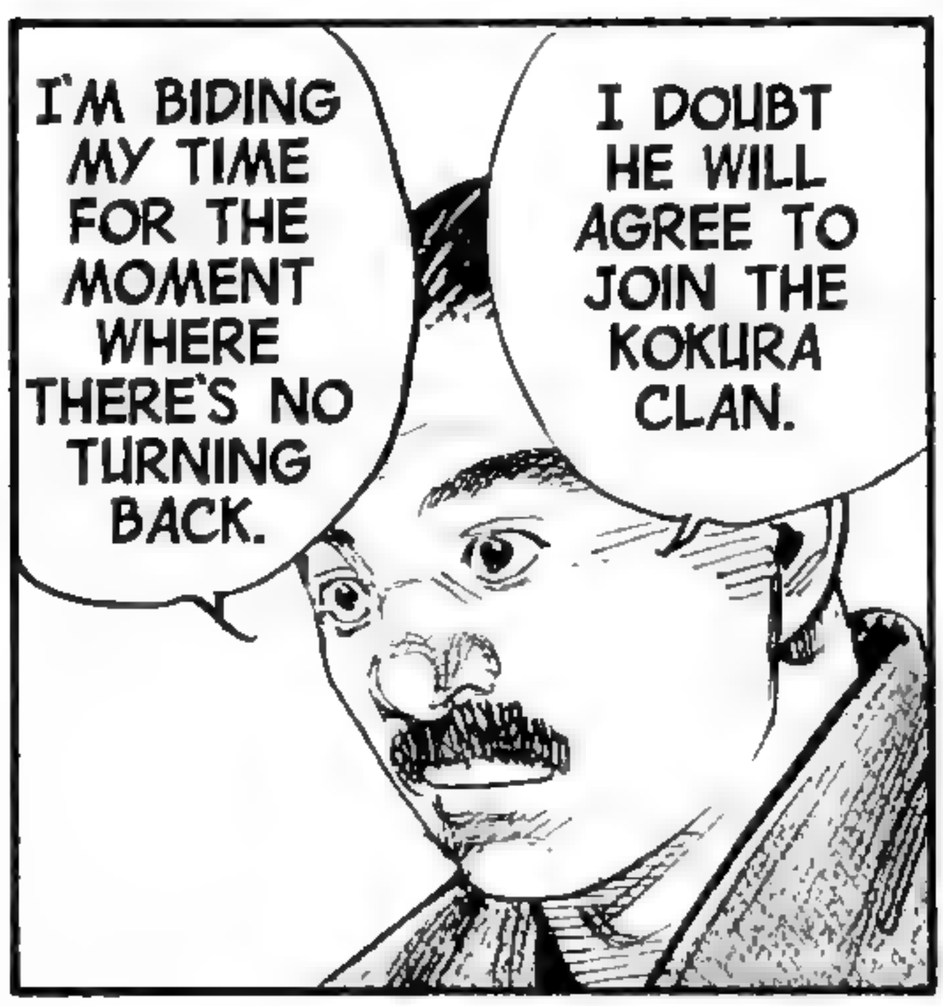
BUT THAT MUSASHI HAS BEEN ACTING RATHER STRANGELY.

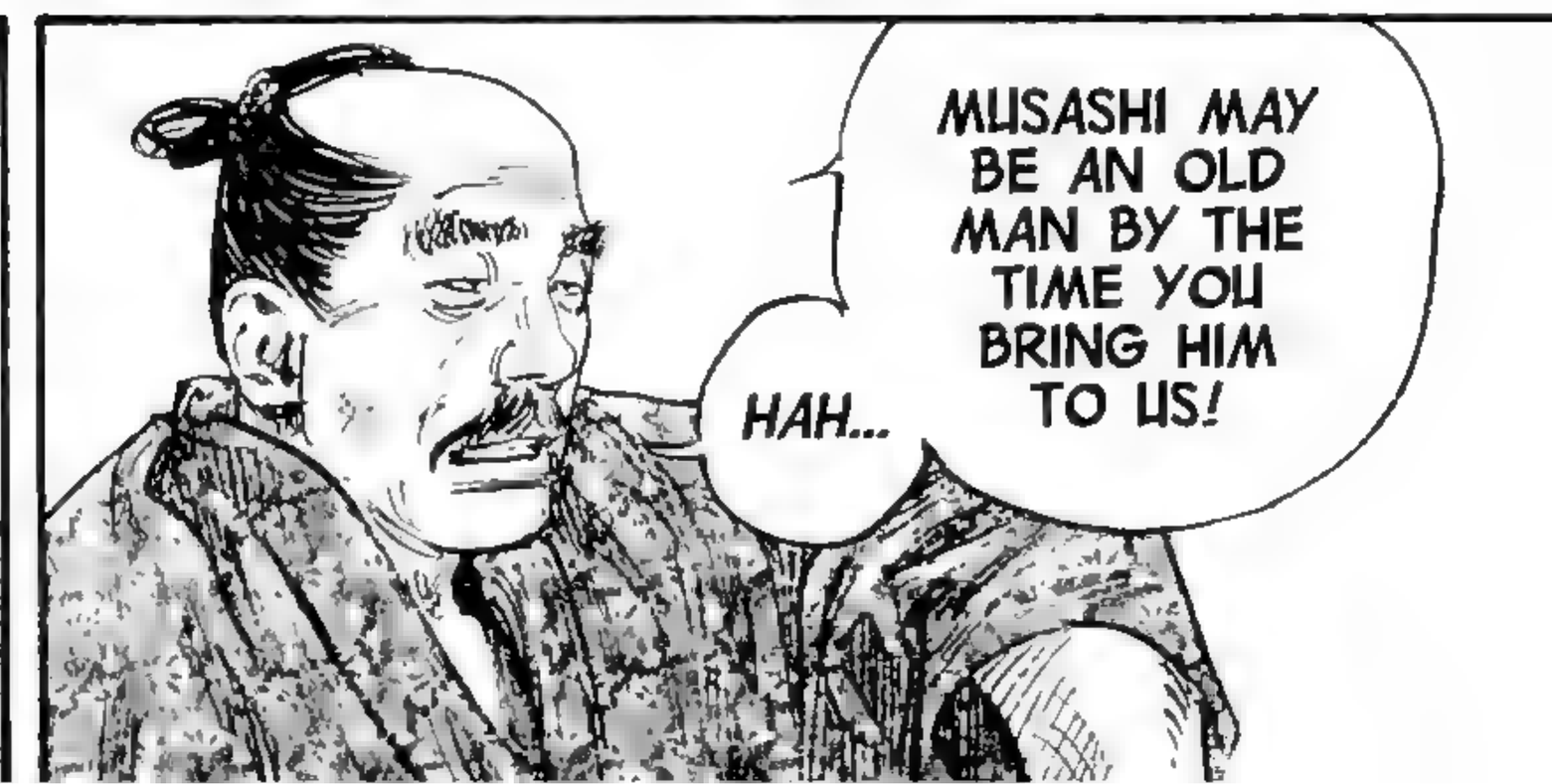
HM?

HE HAS BEEN STAYING IN A VILLAGE ON THE WEST SIDE OF THIS AREA.

YES, I FOUND HIM.

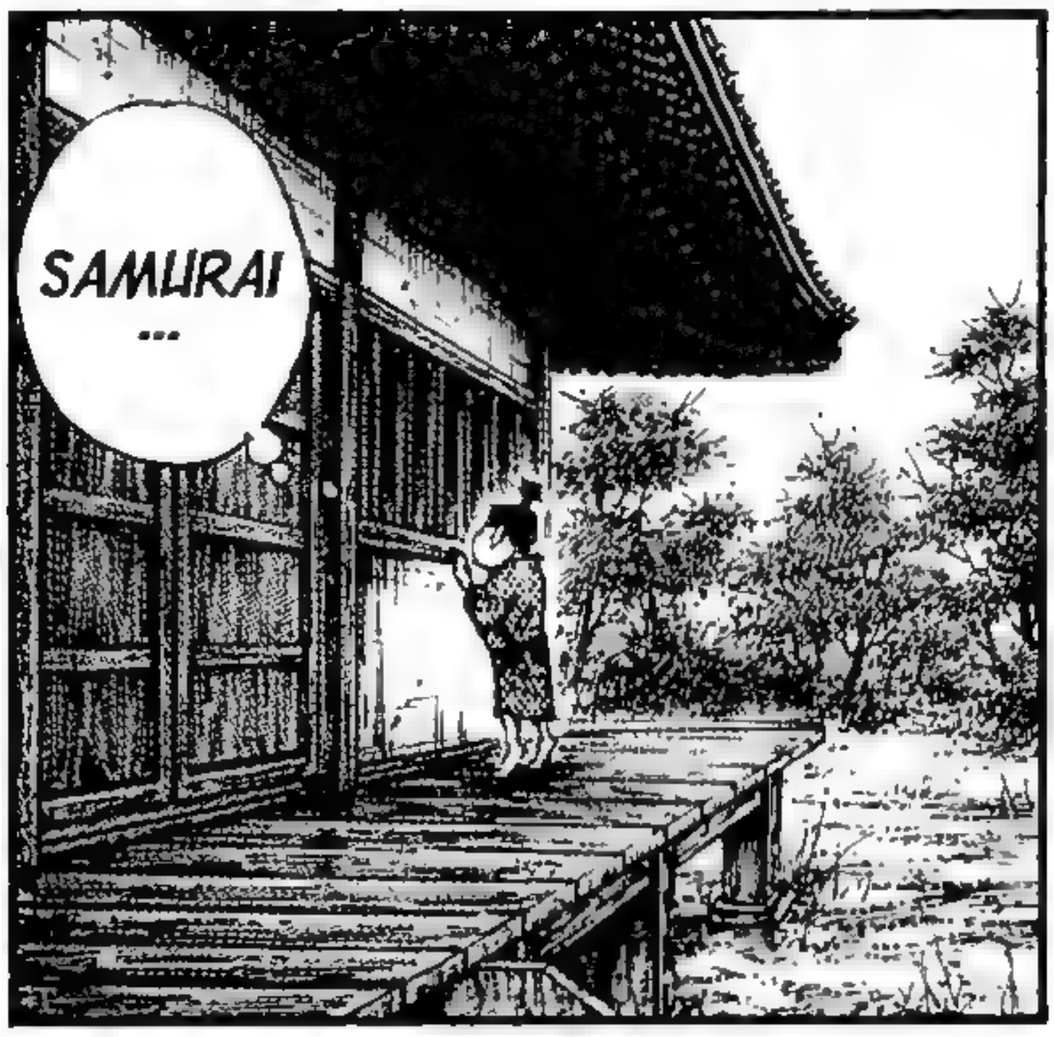
THESE DAYS HE WON'T EVEN TOUCH HIS SWORD.

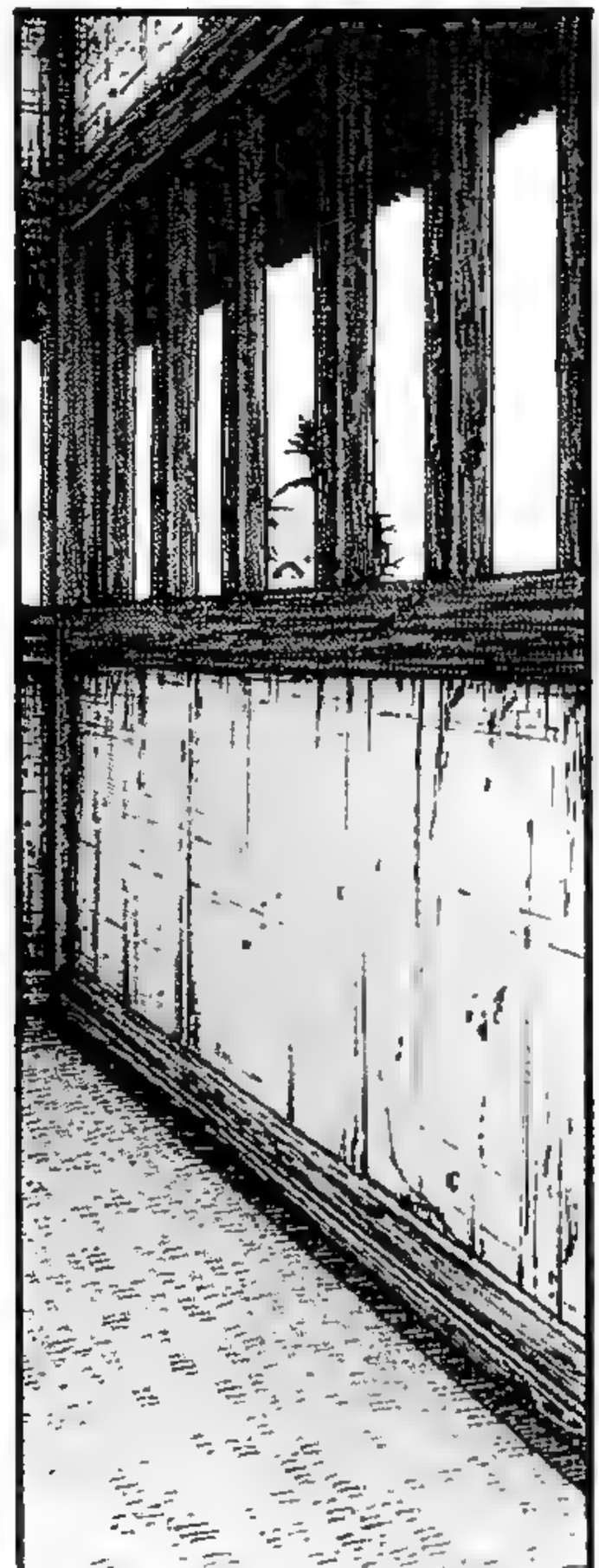


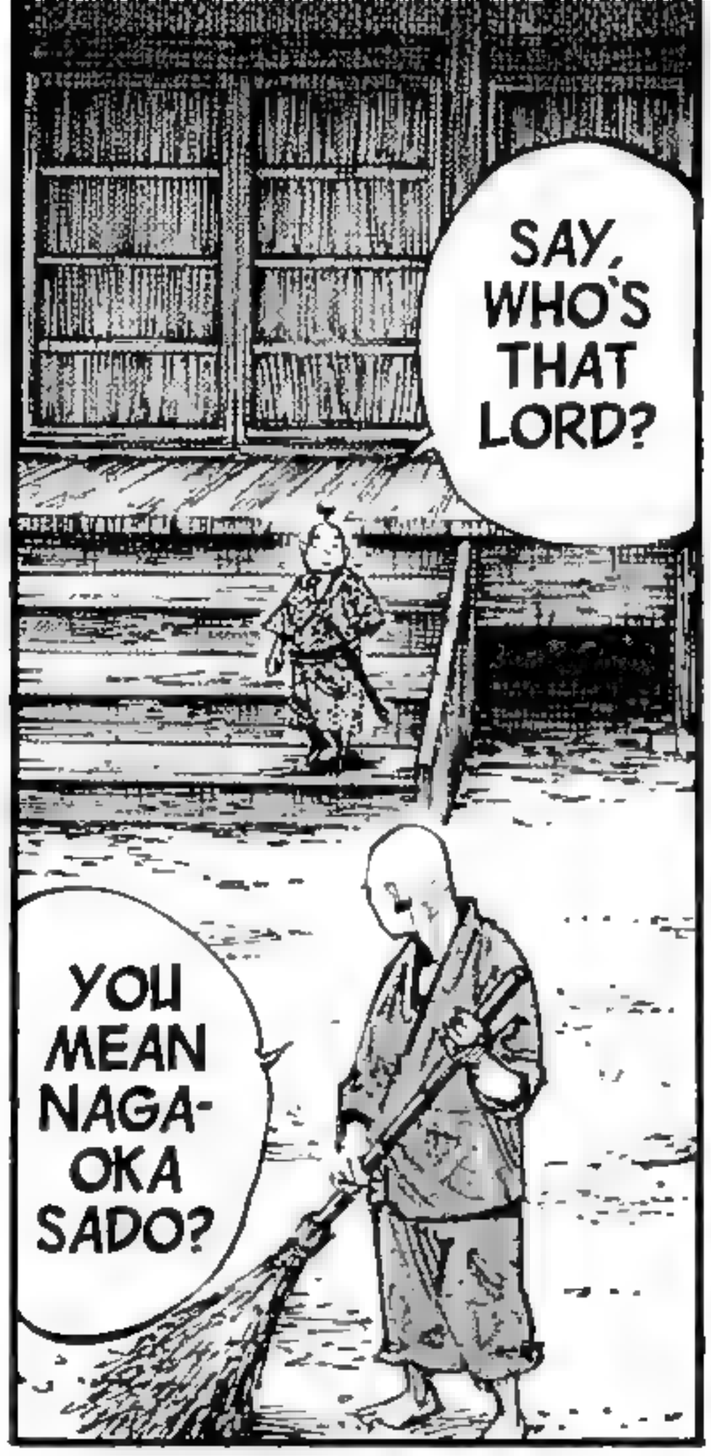


BUT WHAT IF HE HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO PICK UP THE SWORD AND FIGHT?

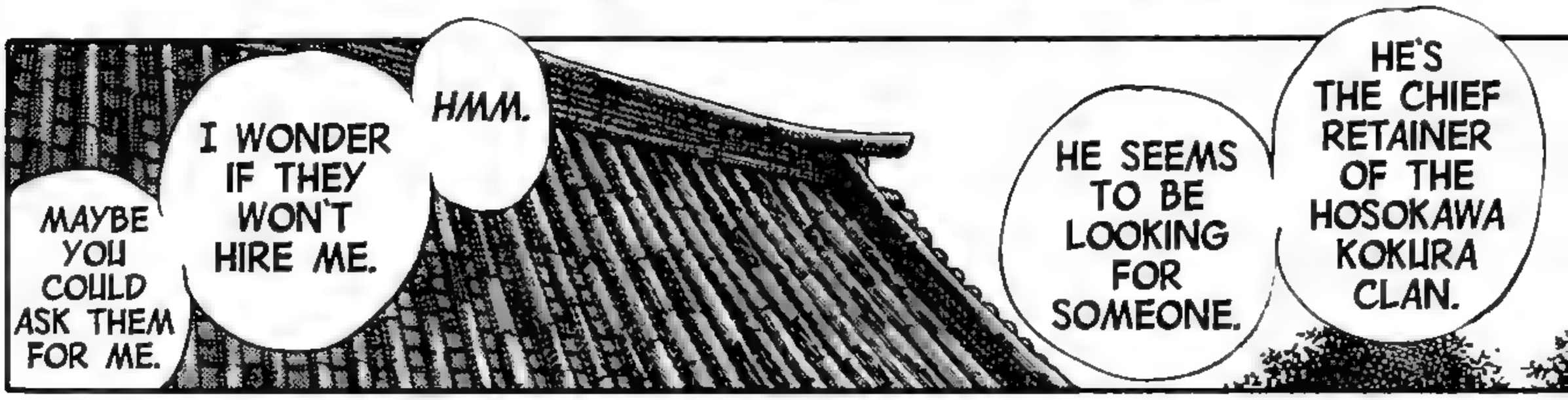
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

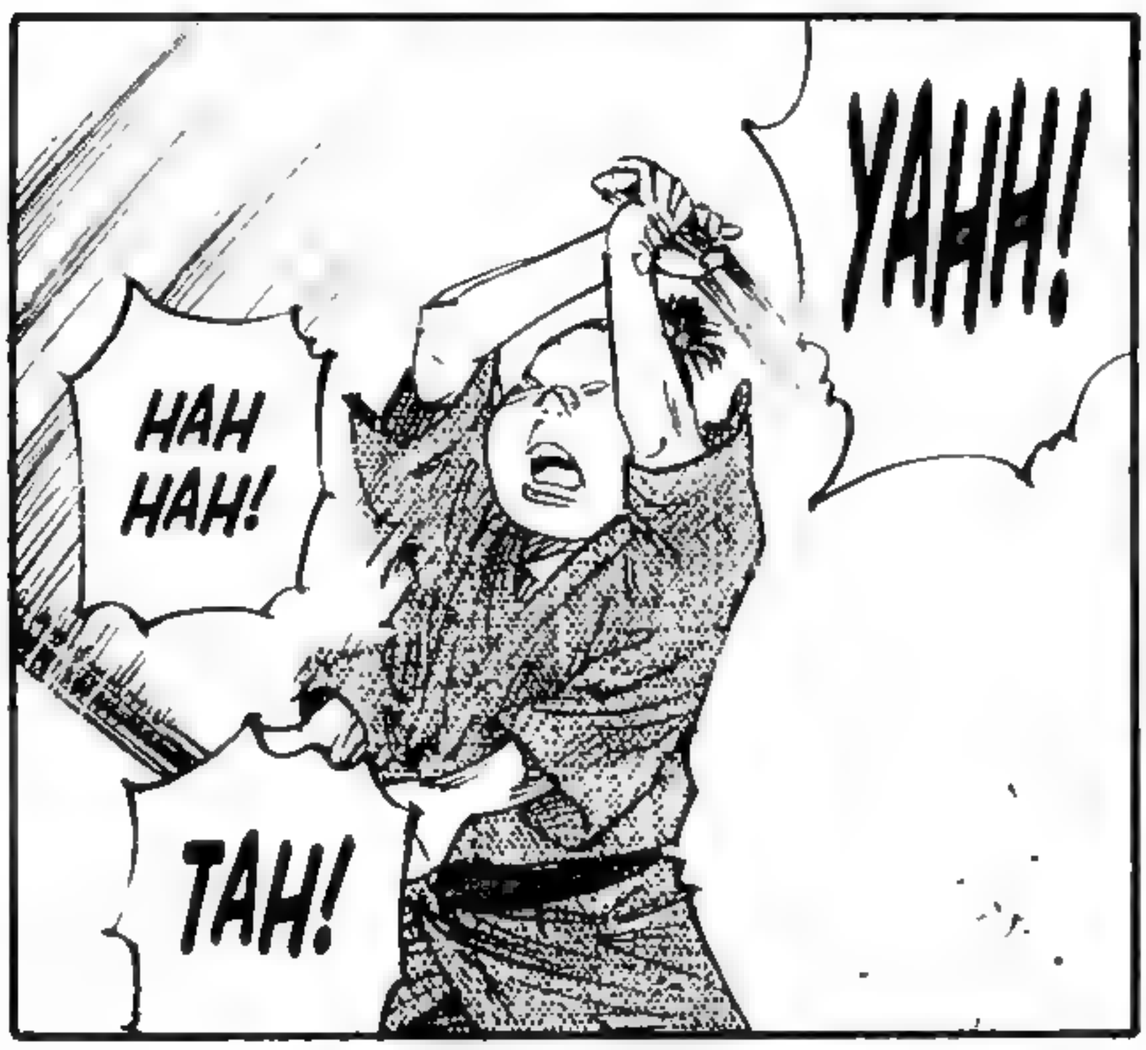





SAY, WHO'S THAT LORD?
YOU MEAN NAGA-OKA SADO?

NAH.
YOU WANT YOUR POUCH BACK?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, IORI?


MAYBE YOU COULD ASK THEM FOR ME.
I WONDER IF THEY WON'T HIRE ME.
HMM.
HE SEEMS TO BE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.
HE'S THE CHIEF RETAINER OF THE HOSOKAWA KOKURA CLAN.


YAHH!
HAH HAH!
TAH!

HM?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE A FARMER'S KID.

FWP
...

YAH!

...IORI.

FWOOSH

MY NAME IS...

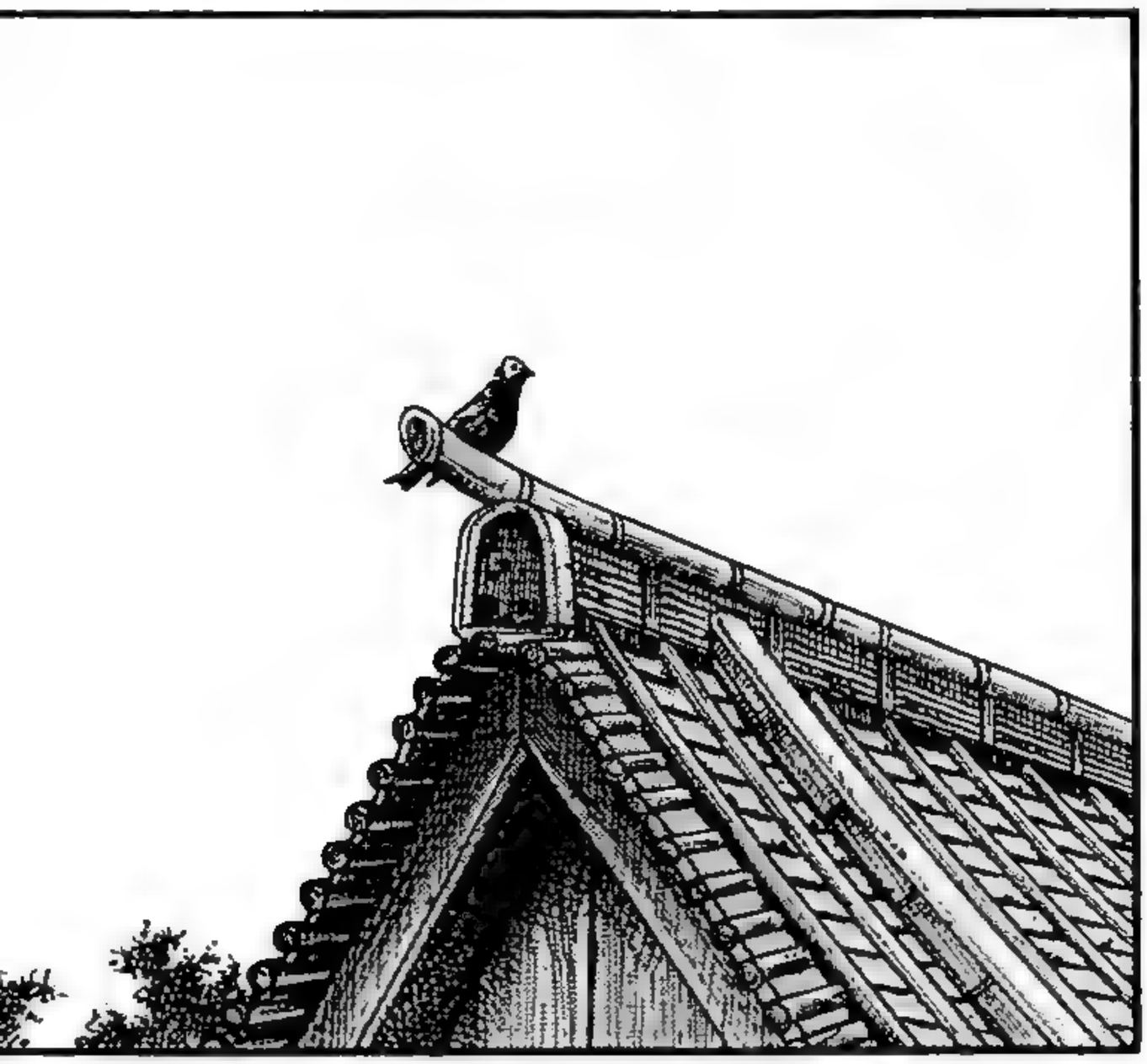
FWOOSH

YAH YAH!

FWOOSH

SHUT UP!

HAH!



FICH

SAY, TAKEZŌ.

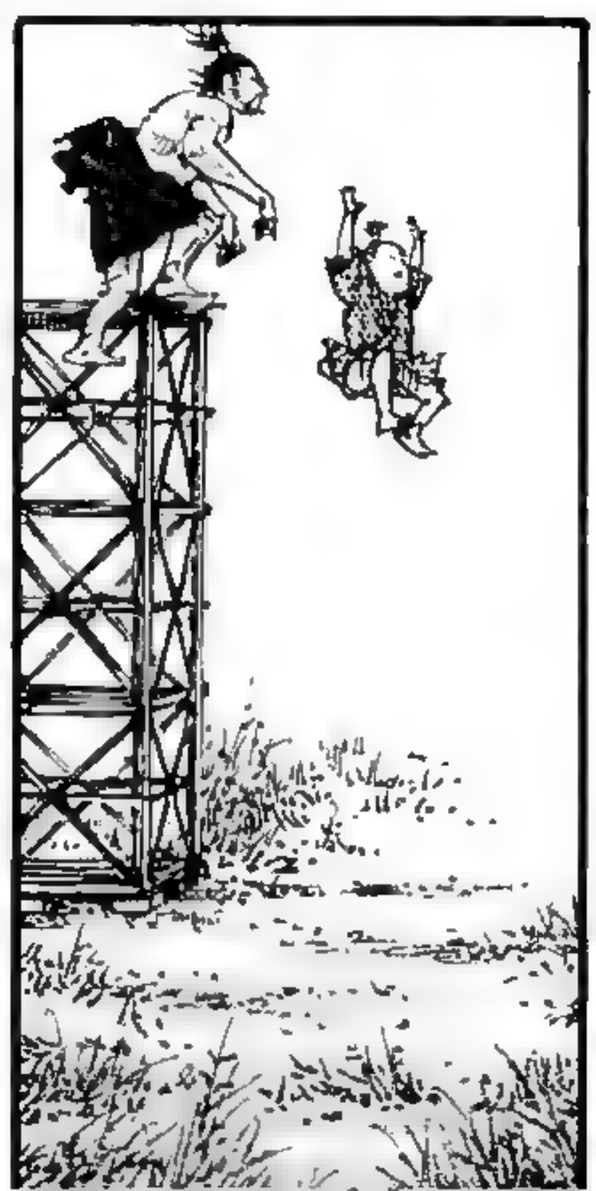
HUH?

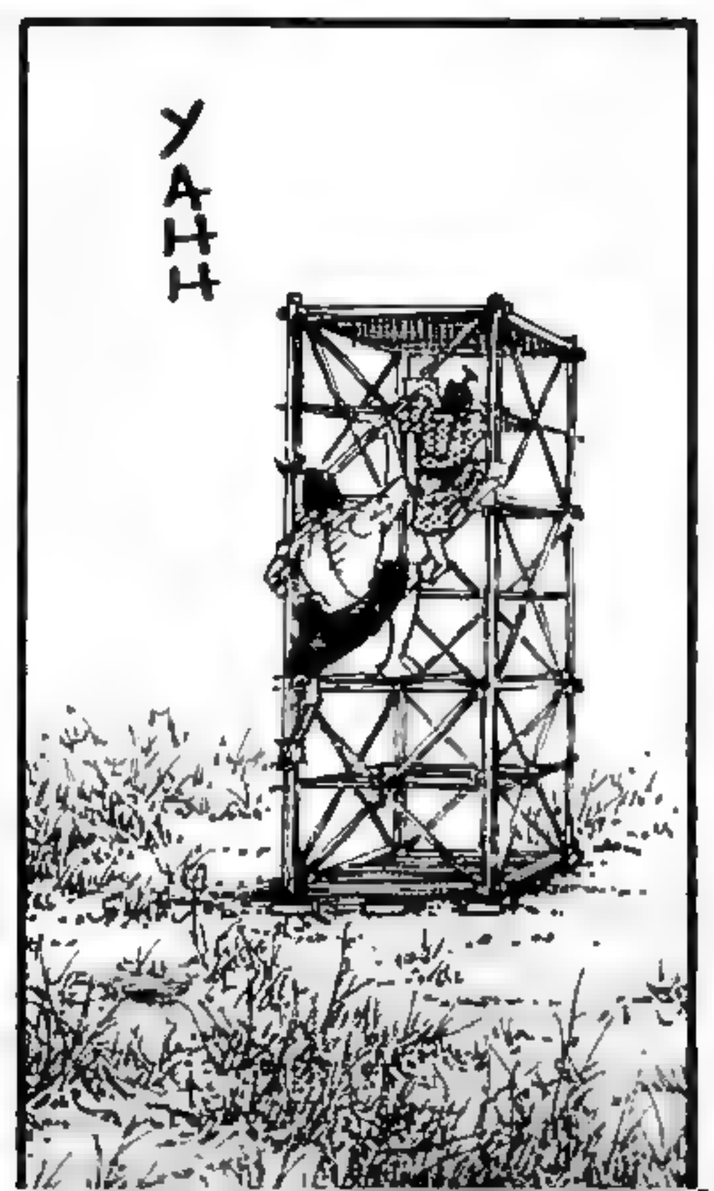
TUP TUP

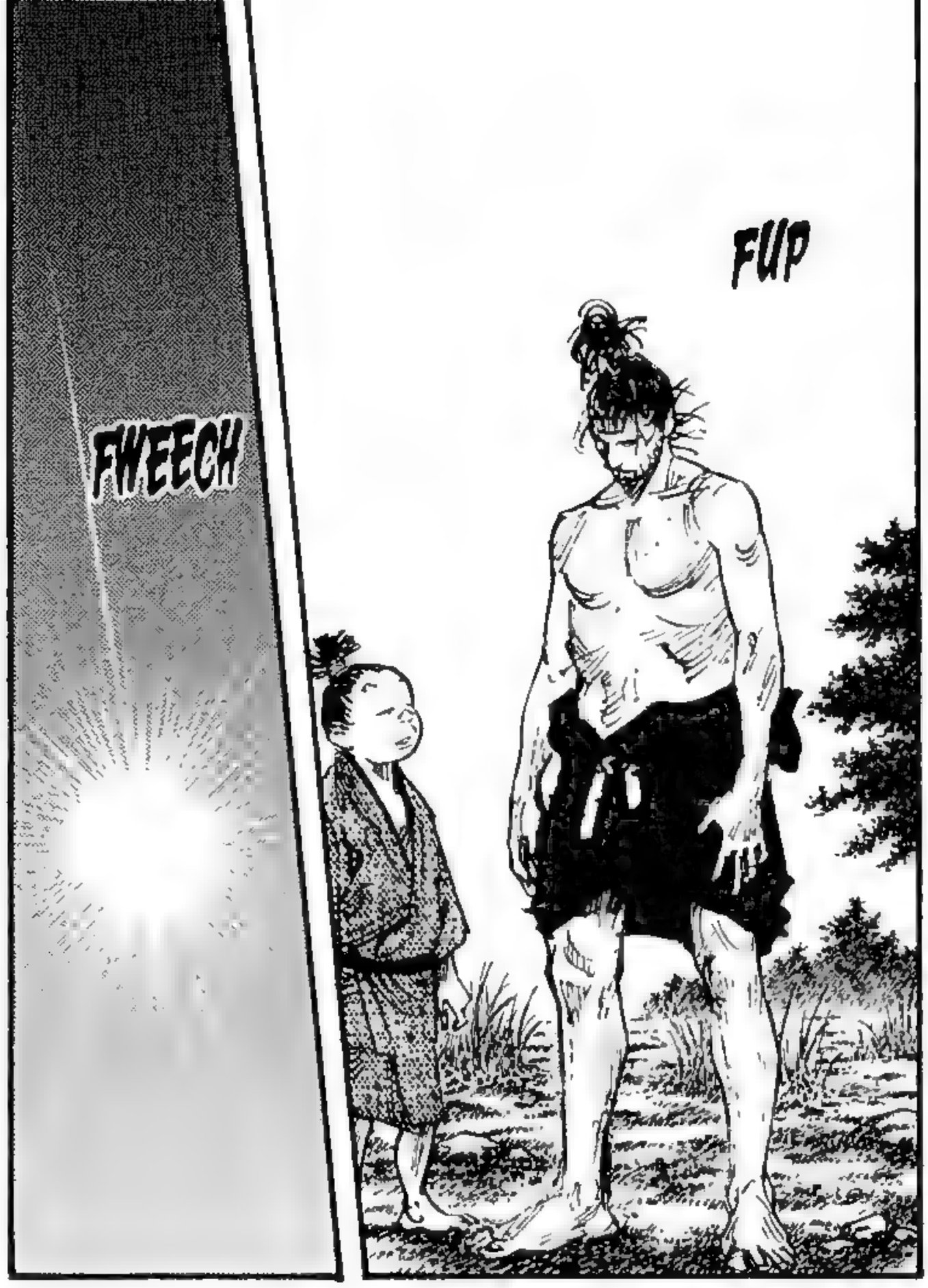
YAHH

HAS IT HEALED?
...

THWUMP

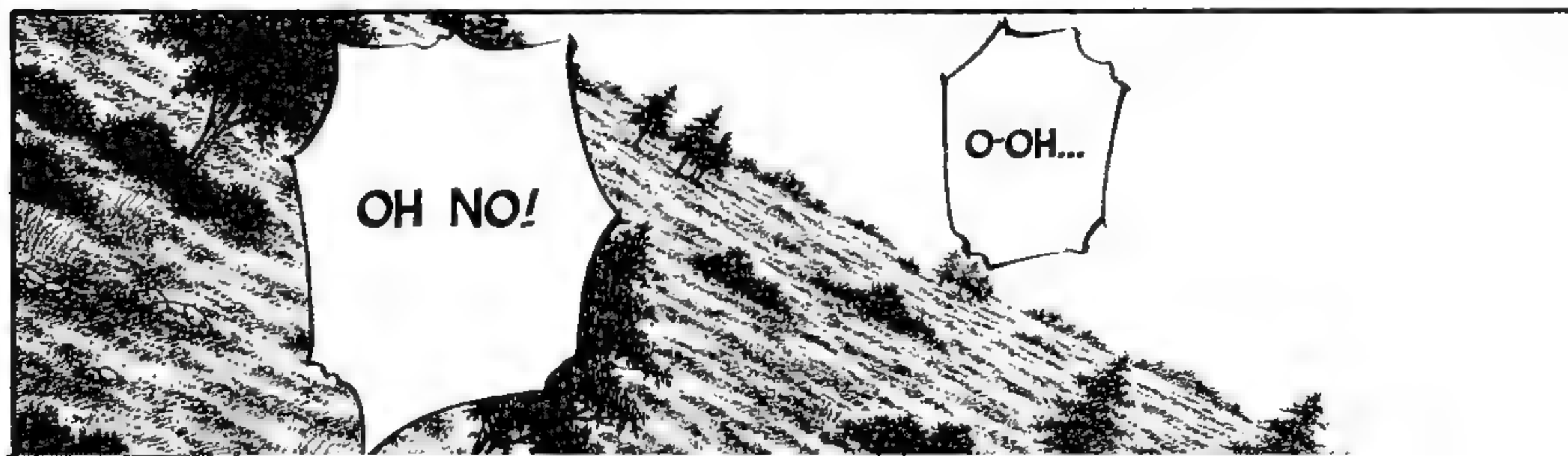



YAHH


FWEECH
FUP

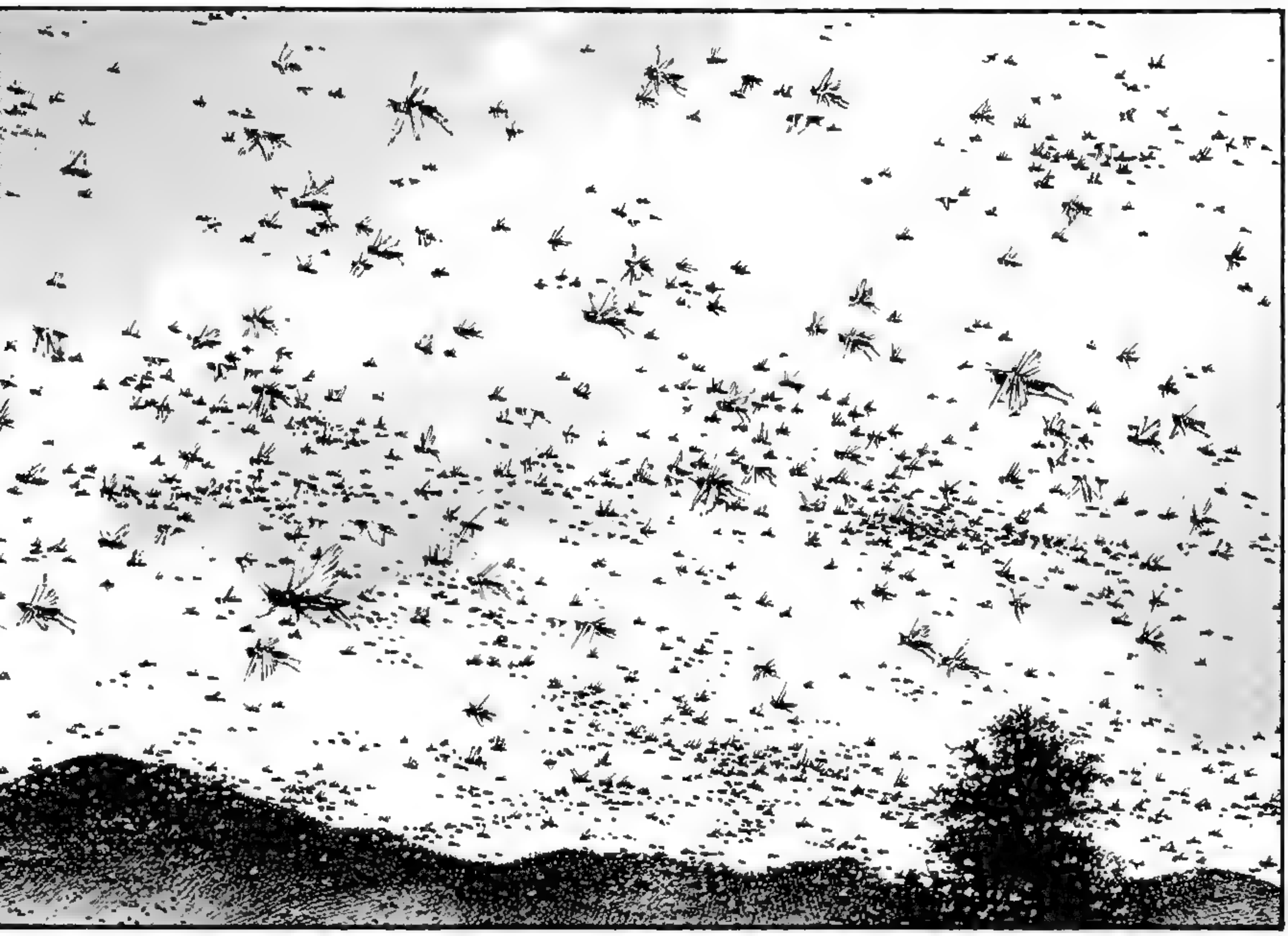
IT'S GETTING BETTER?
NO... BUT...

YEAH...

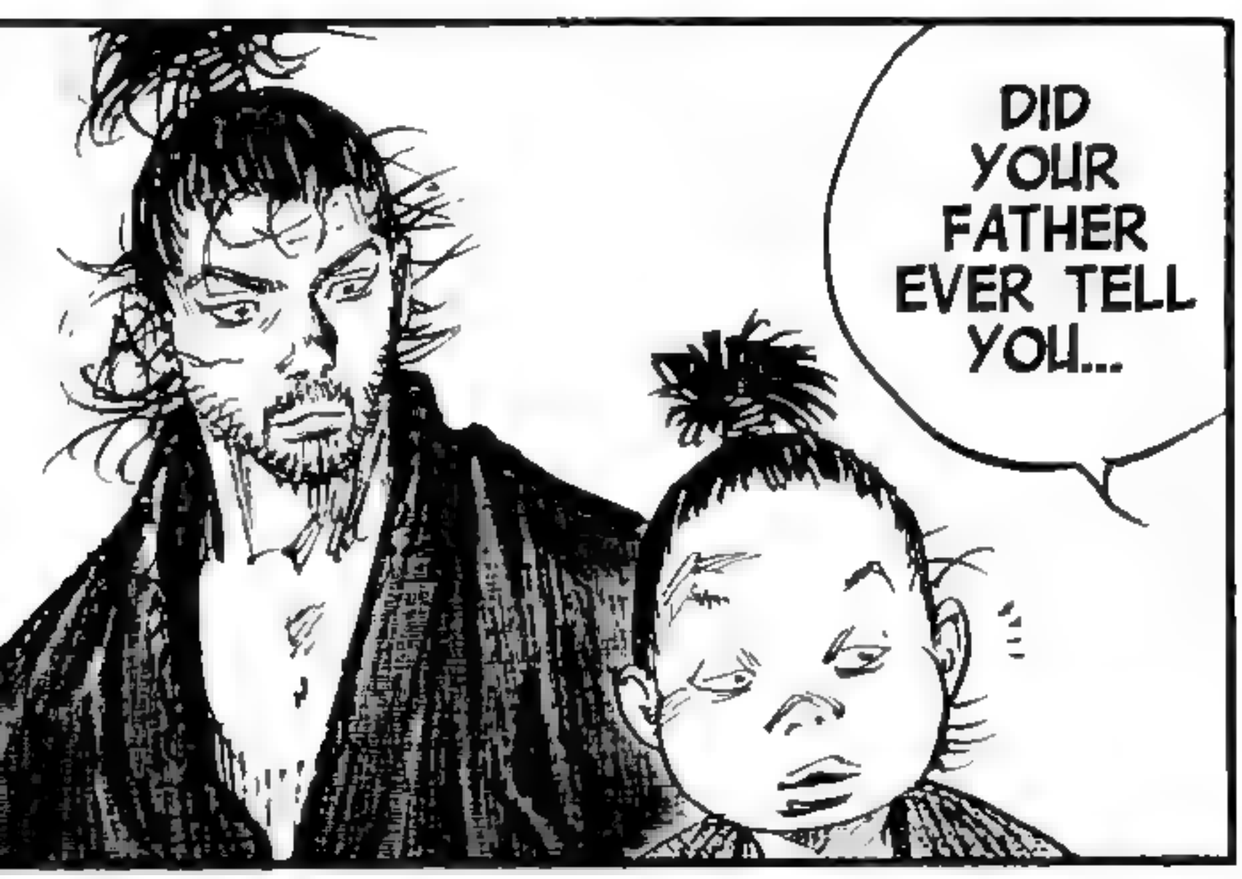

OH NO!
O-OH...

I JUST SAW THEM.
THEY'RE GOING TO EAT EVERY-THING.

WHAT IS IT, GENTA? PUT DOWN YOUR LOAD FIRST.
CALM DOWN.
BIG TROUBLE!
WE'RE IN TROUBLE!
HURRY, EVERYONE! GATHER UP!



!
LOCUSTS?
THEY WON'T CLIMB OVER THE MOUNTAIN.
EVEN IF THEY COULD, THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF BUGS.
CALM DOWN.
THEY'RE GOING TO HEAD OVER HERE...
THE VILLAGE OVER THE MOUNTAIN LOST ALL THEIR CROPS TO THE LOCUST.


DID YOUR FATHER EVER TELL YOU...

THEY GO SO CRAZY WHEN THEY BUNCH UP LIKE THAT.
JUST BUGS?
IORI...

AIEE...
THEY CAME WHEN WE WERE KIDS...

EVEN THEIR FACES LOOKED DIFFER-ENT.

SNIPP

SNIPP

OUCH.

LARGE BLACK RED BODIES.

THEY HAVE THICK BLACK STREAKS WITH ANGRY EYES.

I'VE SEEN THE SAME TYPE IN HUMANS.

DAD SAID SO TOO.

I THOUGHT SO. WE SAW THEM TOGETH-ER.

...LOOK SO MEAN?

HOW COULD A BUNCH OF BUGS...

DEVOURING EVERYTHING WITH A FEROCIOUS APPETITE.

SWORDSMEN AREN'T ALL THAT DIFFERENT FROM THEM.

FEEDING OFF EVERY-THING.

ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT THEM-SELVES.

YES...

THEY JUST BITE ON ANYONE THEY PLEASE...

...ONCE THEY FIND OUT SOMEONE'S GOT SOME FOOD.

IF THE LOCUSTS DON'T COME, WE STILL HAVE LOCUSTS WHO LOOK LIKE PEOPLE...

JUST BECAUSE YOU LOSE YOUR CROPS AND STARVE DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN YOU'RE AN ANGEL.

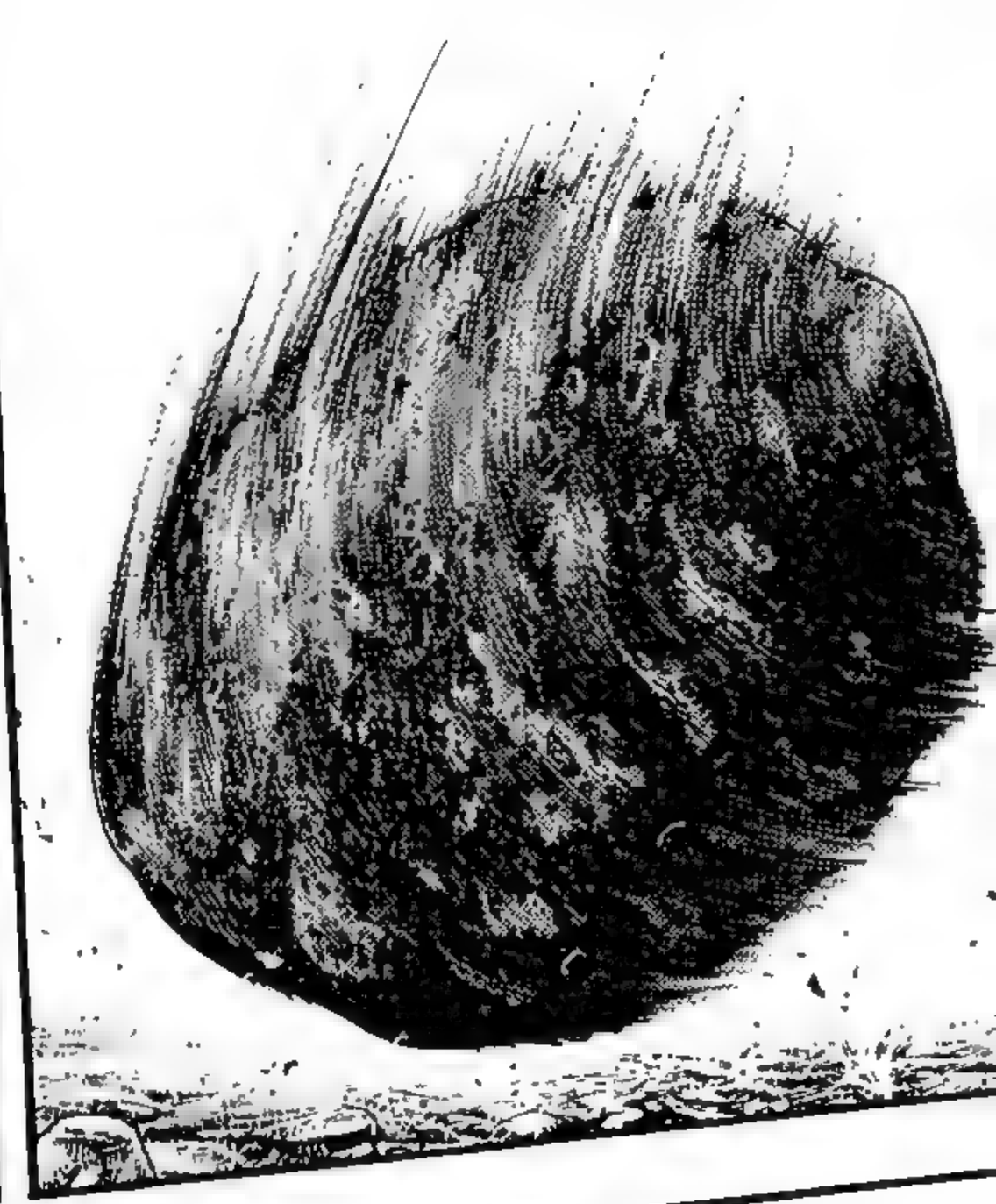
HEY! THEY'RE COMING!!
THERE'RE FIFTY MEN...!!
WHUMP
WHEREAS PEOPLE...
A LOCUST IS A FORCE OF NATURE.
THAT'S GOOD NEWS.
...AREN'T.
!!
LOCUST?
OR MEN?

...!!

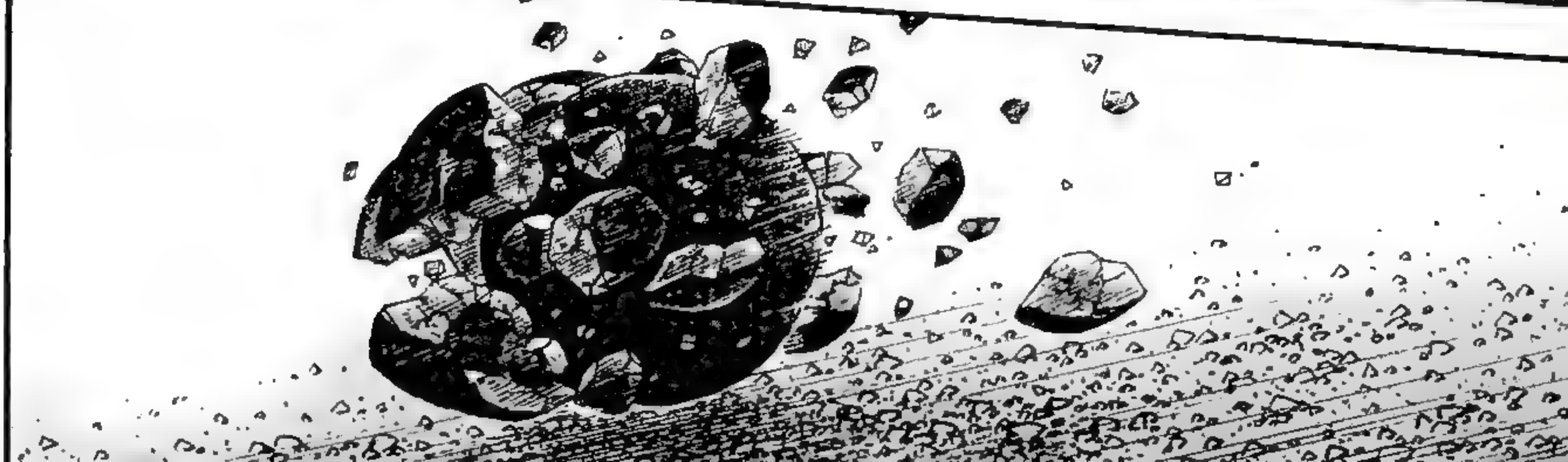
THEY'LL TAKE EVERYTING AND THEN YOU'LL STARVE.
...ALL YOU'VE WORKED FOR?
SO YOU'RE LEAVING...

THERE AREN'T EVEN FIFTY.
HOW CAN YOU WIN BY EXAGGERATING THEIR NUMBERS?
ONE...
...TWO, THREE...
THERE'S ONLY EIGHTEEN OF THEM.

YOU DAMN BUGS.



AGAIN...
...



UNTIL YOU CAN'T MOVE.

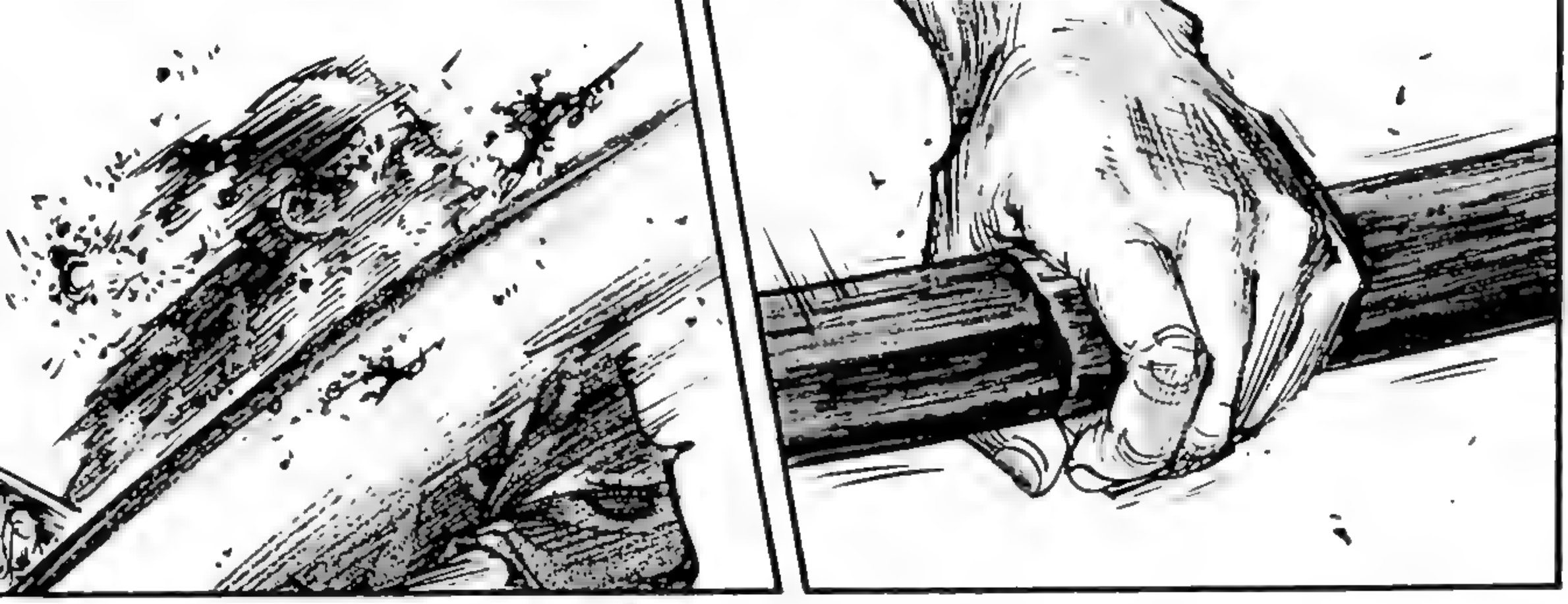
HAVE TO KEEP WINNING...
THE FIGHTING ALL OVER AGAIN.

FWIP

IS THERE NO OTHER WAY?

HEY...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO FIGHT?
DON'T KNOW ANYTHING BUT FIGHTING.
SOME MAY SAY IT'S UGLY...
...BUT IT SURE BEATS THE UN-KNOWN.
THAT'S WHERE WE'VE BELONGED...
...ALL THIS TIME.
RIGHT?

ISN'T THIS COMFORT-ABLE?
YOU SHINE WHEN YOU FIGHT.
THE PERSON CALLED MIYAMOTO MUSASHI.
DOESN'T THIS FEEL RIGHT?
NOW...
THEY'RE COMING.
THE DIFFERENCE...
THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING. LET'S TEACH THEM A LESSON.



THUNK

TAKEZŌ!
...

SEIZE THE SITUATION ...

SHOW HOW MUCH MORE MIGHTY YOU ARE THAN YOUR OPPONENT. EVEN IF IT'S A LIE.
...IN THAT MOMENT ...
AS LONG AS IT SEEMS THAT WAY...
...BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR OPPONENT.

WHUD

YOU LIED.

THIS IS ODD.
...HE WAS REALLY PLOWING THE FIELDS UNTIL NOW...
NO...
THAT IS THE MUSASHI WE KNOW.

WE'RE TAKING HIM TO KOKURA.

"MIYAMOTO MUSASHI"...

TAKEZŌ...
MUSASHI.

THE KANJI CHARACTERS FOR TAKEZŌ CAN BE READ AS MUSASHI.

THE MIGHTY FIGHTER WHO DEFEATED THE ENTIRE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL.
THE MASTER SWORDSMAN.

SO HE'S MIYAMOTO MUSASHI!!

KOKURA

#309 | Soil

MUSASHI ...

M-MU...

MUSASHI.

SENS--

T-TAKEZ--

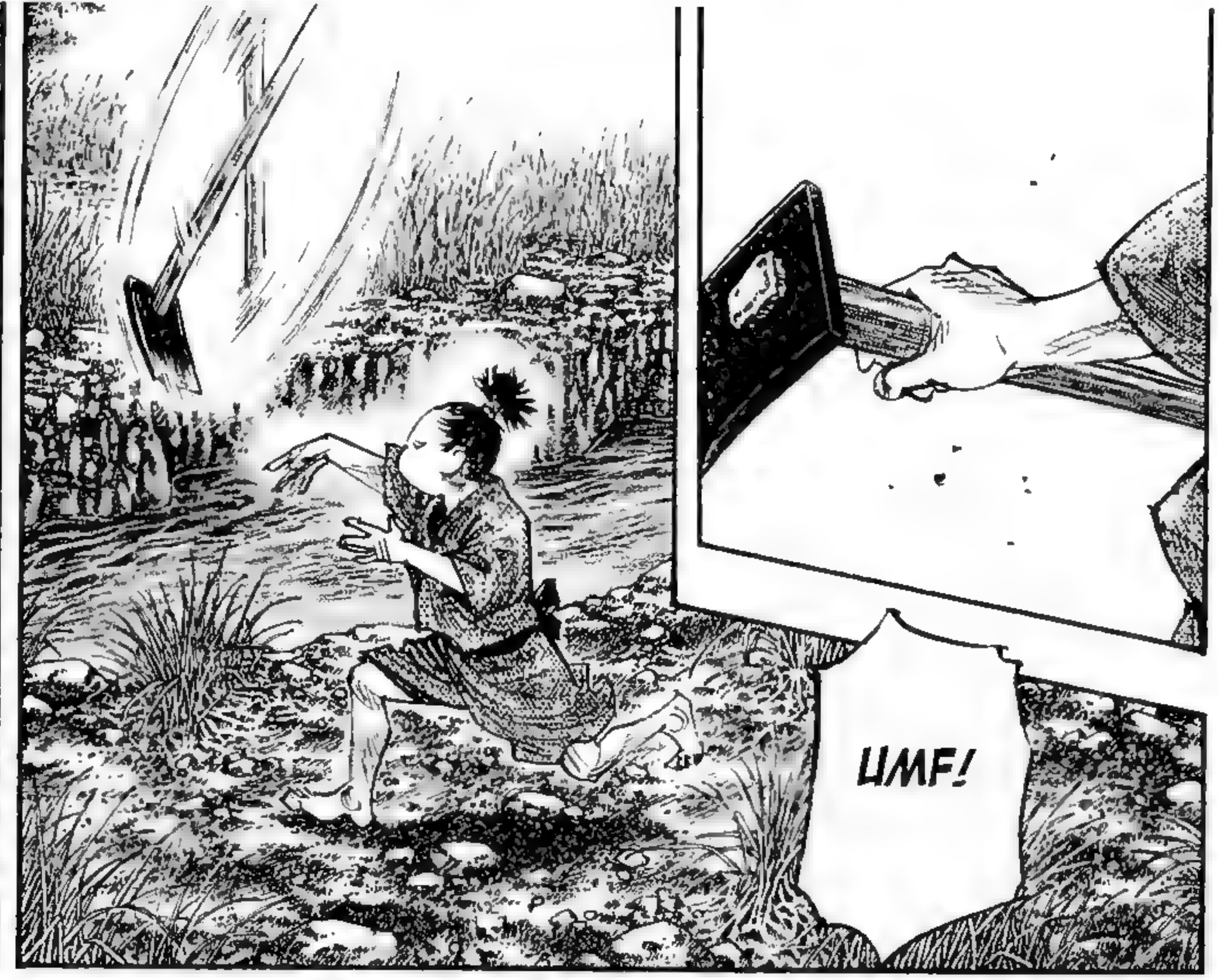
I MEAN...

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI SENSEI!!

DASH

HUH?

PLSH


UMF!

AND GET A POSITION WITH THE LORD OF A CASTLE!
YOU SHOULD LEAVE HERE NOW, AND GO TO EDO OR KYOTO OR SOME-WHERE...

WATER'S COLD!
SPLSH
WHY'D YOU THROW IT?
SPLSH

PLEASE DO THAT!
MUSASHI SENSEI!

FWICH

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU'RE MUSASHI!!

TAKEZŌ!!

GET RID OF THAT PLOW!!

YOU FOOL!!

HUP

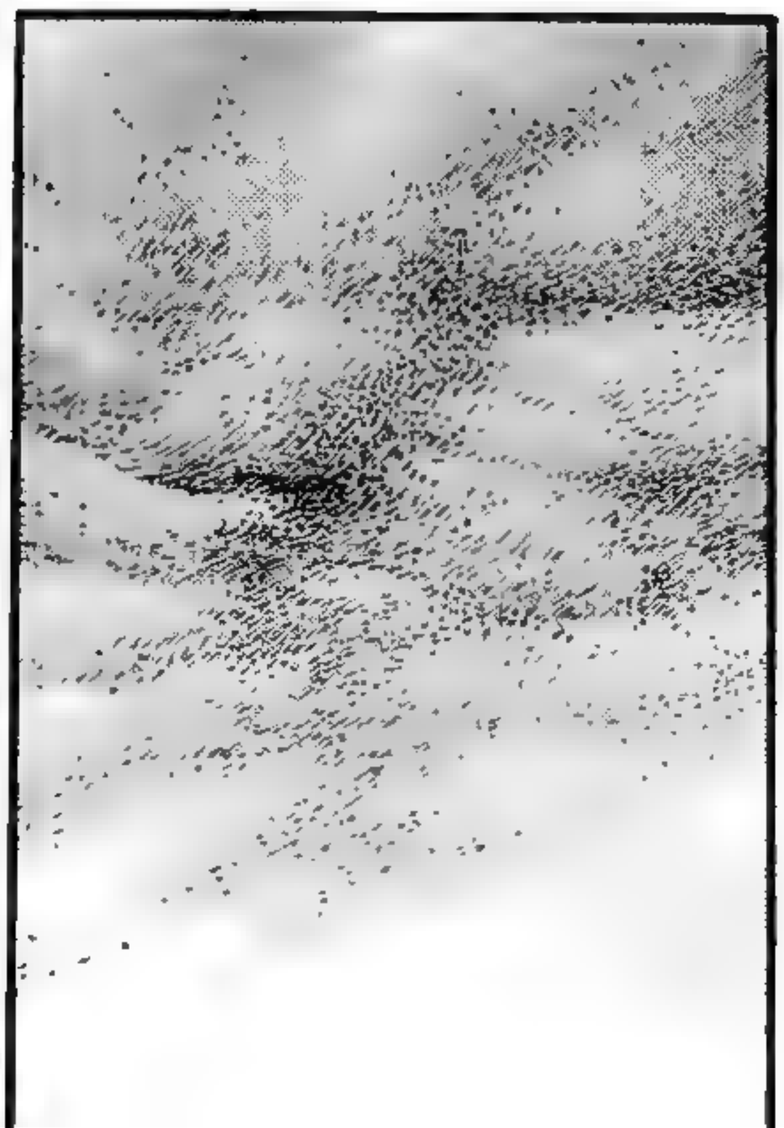
FWOOSH

WA- WATCH OUT.

TMP

AND A FAMOUS PRAC-TITIONER OF THE ARTS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU'RE A SAMURAI!
A MIGHTY SWORDS-MAN!
URR...
URR URR...
YOU FOOL!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING PLOWING THIS STUPID SOIL HERE!

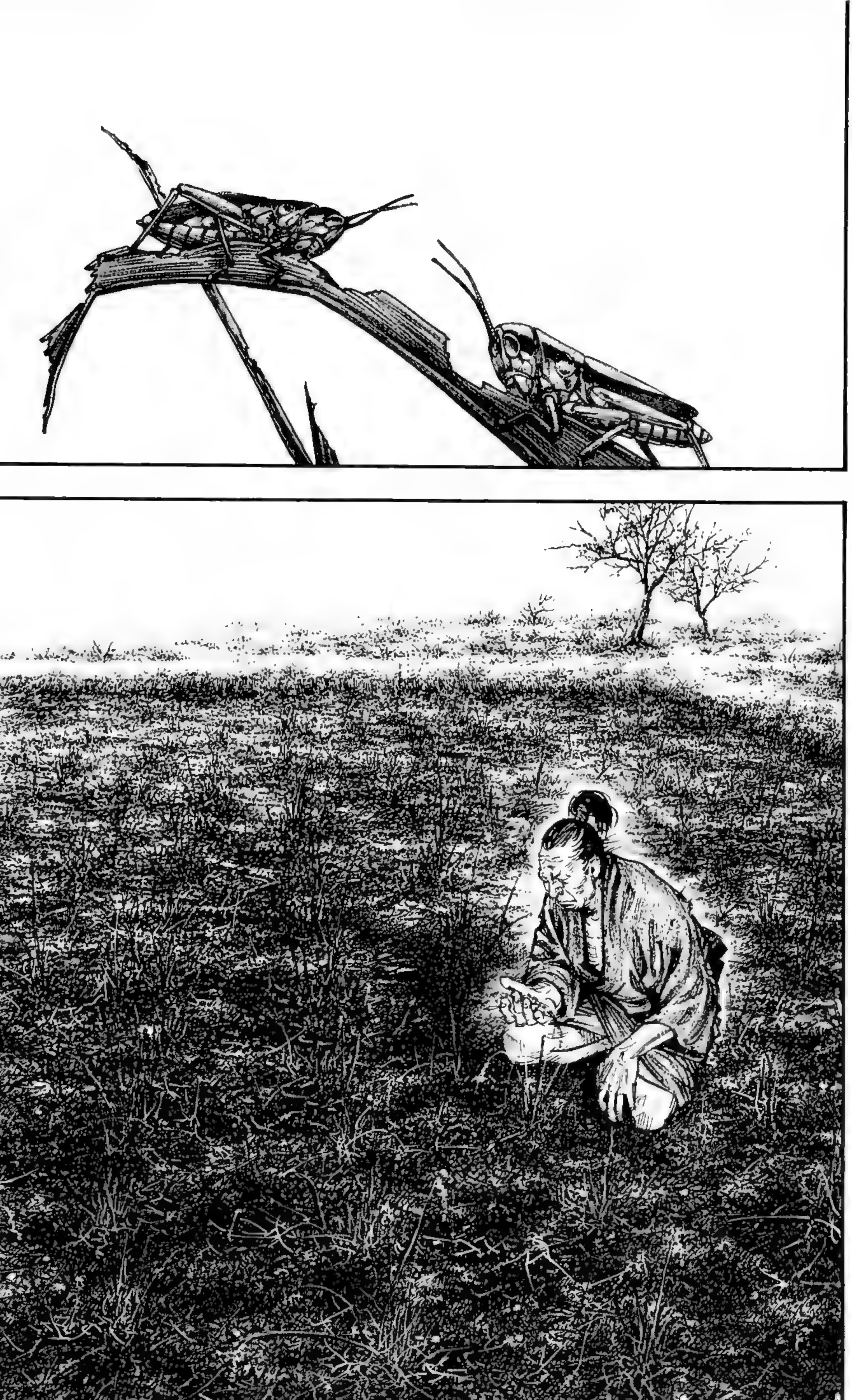
HUH... IS THAT RAIN?

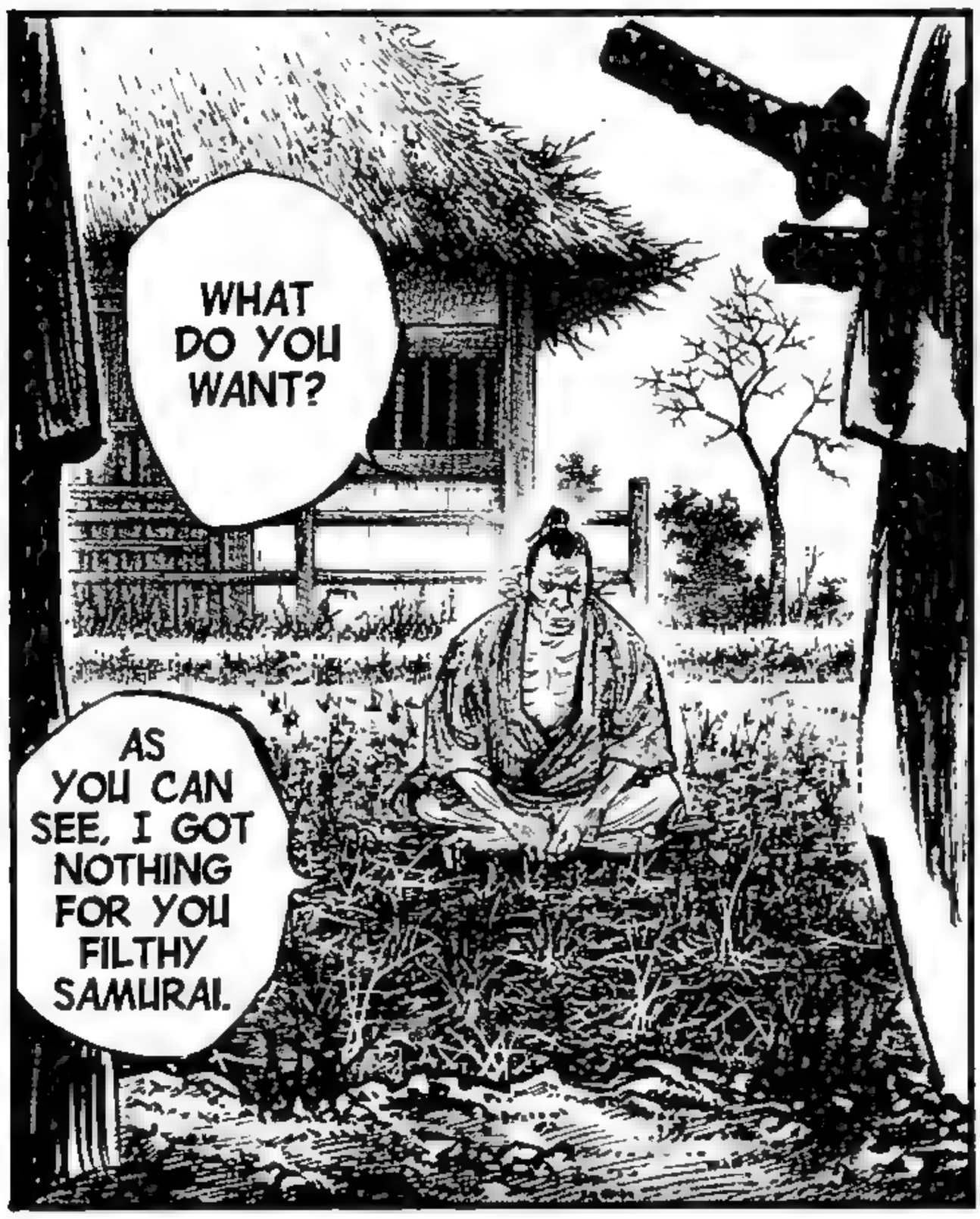


FOOL?!

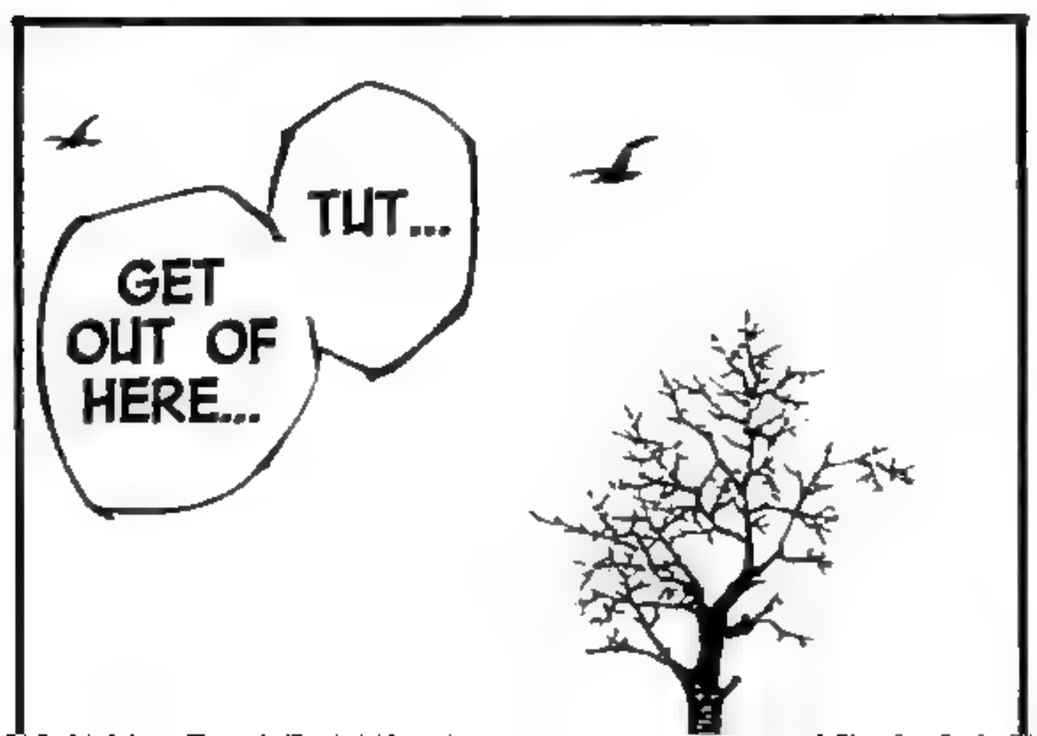
AHHH!

THEY'RE COMING.




WHAT DO YOU WANT?
AS YOU CAN SEE, I GOT NOTHING FOR YOU FILTHY SAMURAI.

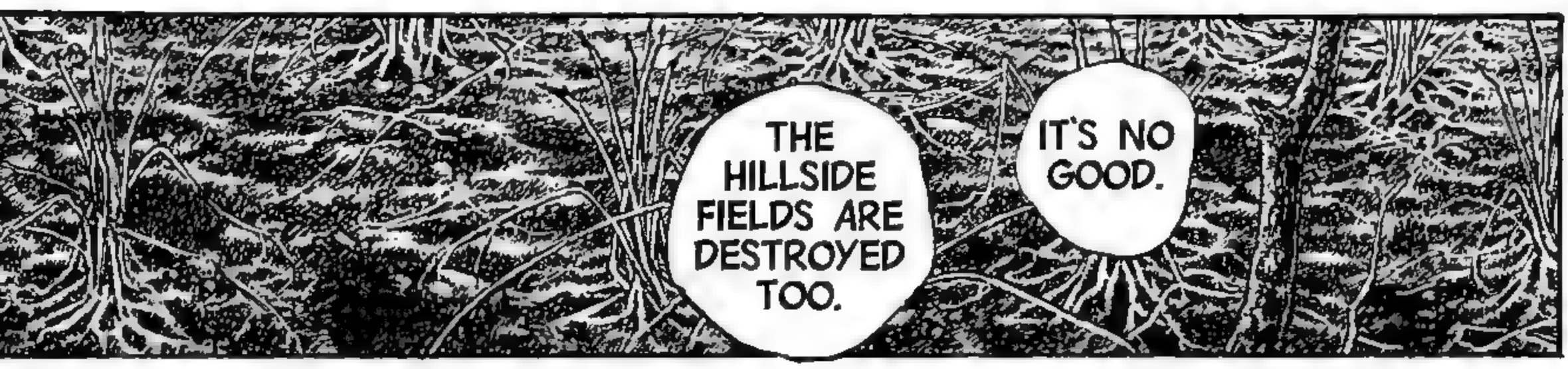
WHY BOTHER WITH THIS RUNDOWN VILLAGE...
THIS IS TERRI-BLE...


TUT...
GET OUT OF HERE...

GLARE

HMPH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IT'S LIKE YOU BROUGHT ALL THIS HERE.


THE HILLSIDE FIELDS ARE DESTROYED TOO.
IT'S NO GOOD.

IT WAS THE LOCUST.
OPEN YOUR EYES.

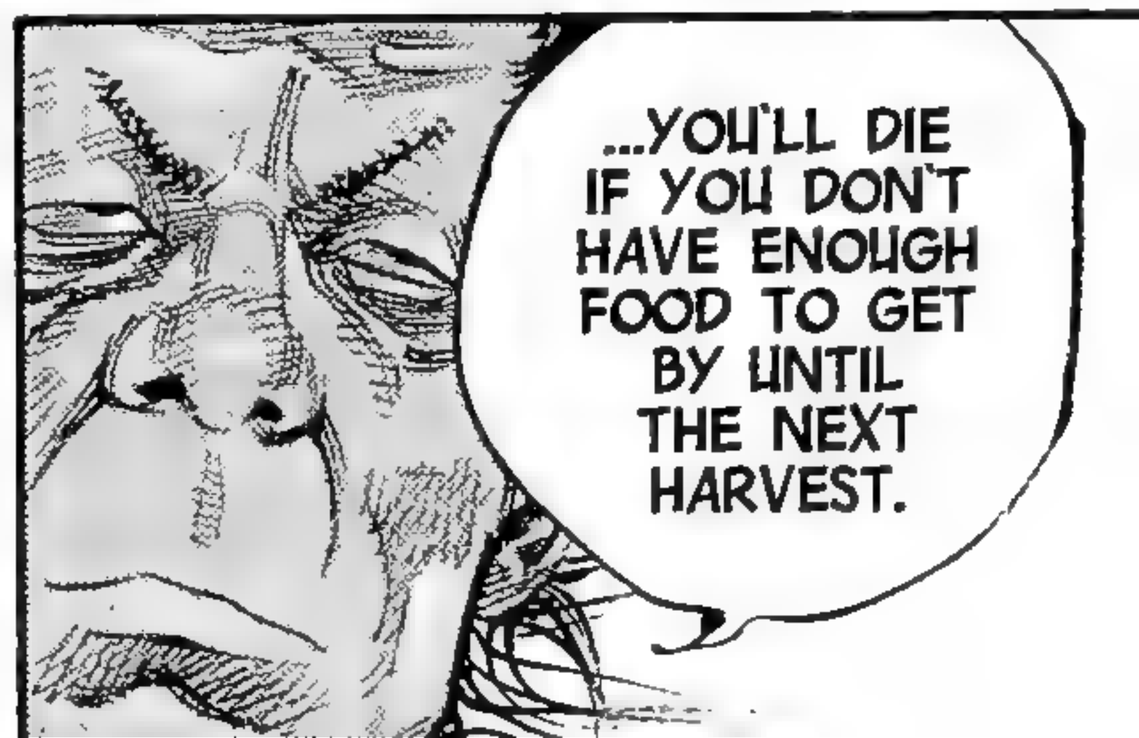
THE MAN WHO DESTROYED THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL... ARRIVES...
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
...AND WE LOSE EVERY-THING.
IS THAT A MERE COINCI-DENCE?

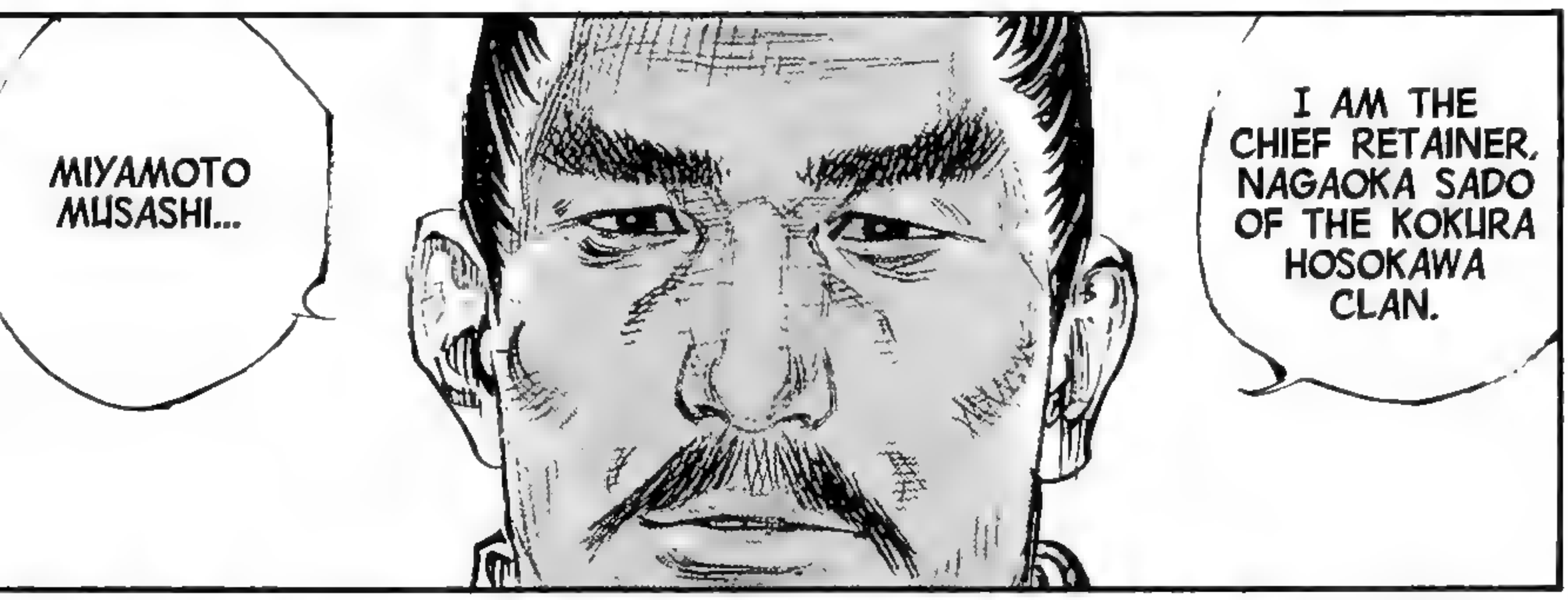
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

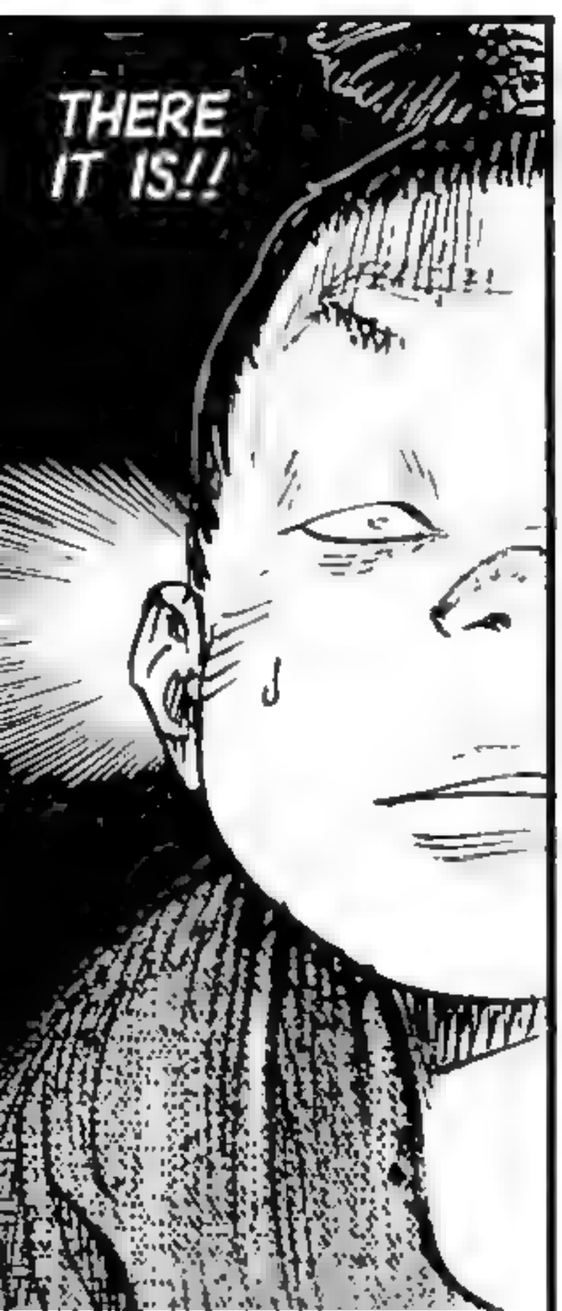
...

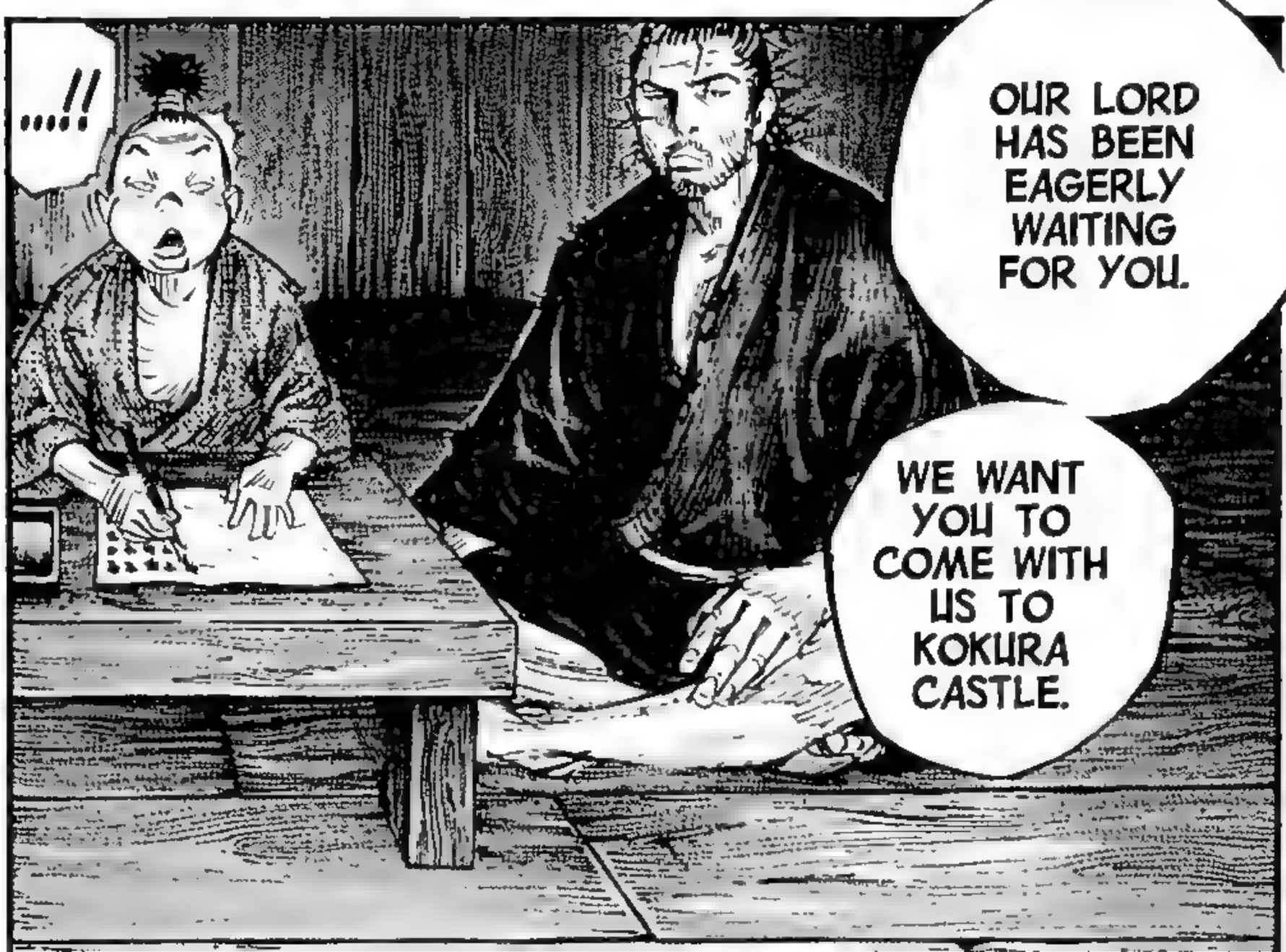
A DRIFTER CAN LEAVE WHENEVER HE WANTS.

...




MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
I AM THE CHIEF RETAINER, NAGAOKA SADO OF THE KOKURA HOSOKAWA CLAN.


THERE IT IS!!


...!!
OUR LORD HAS BEEN EAGERLY WAITING FOR YOU.
WE WANT YOU TO COME WITH US TO KOKURA CASTLE.

I CANNOT.

!!

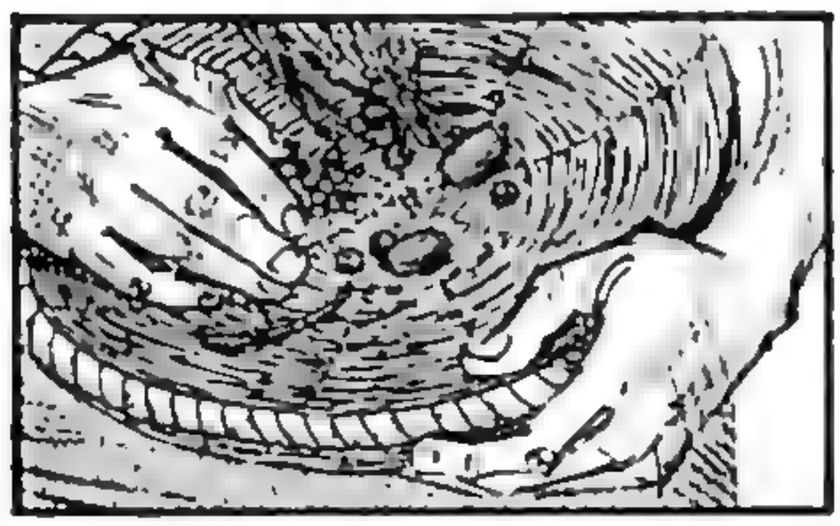
FWAHHH
WAHHHH

THE MILK HAS STOPPED COMING.
SHUT HIM UP!

...

AHH
IT'S ALL RIGHT, CHILD.
LOOK HOW WEAK HE IS.

KAWW
KAWW



...
...
I WANT MORE TO EAT...

AS LONG AS THE SOIL IS HERE, IT'LL GIVE US CROPS.
WE JUST HAVE TO GET THROUGH THE REST OF THE YEAR.

THE SOIL.

SOIL...

I HAVE TO SAVE THEM UNTIL THEN.
NEXT YEAR'S SEEDS.

WE HAVE WATER.

RIGHT, IORI?

THERE'S SOIL HERE TOO.

NOW WE CAN PLANT RICE COME SPRING.

A RICE PADDY FIELD.

!
....
SOAKED INTO THE SOIL?
WHAT ABOUT THE WATER ?
IT'S DRY!

...!!

THIS SOIL CAN'T BE USED FOR RICE PADDIES.
IT'S USELESS.

LEAVE THIS LAND NOW!
CAN'T YOU SEE, YOU STUPID SAMURAI, YOU CAN'T PLOW A FARM ON YOUR OWN!

...

I'LL KILL YOU.

GASP

BRING SOME OF THAT SOIL.
COME...

HMPH ...

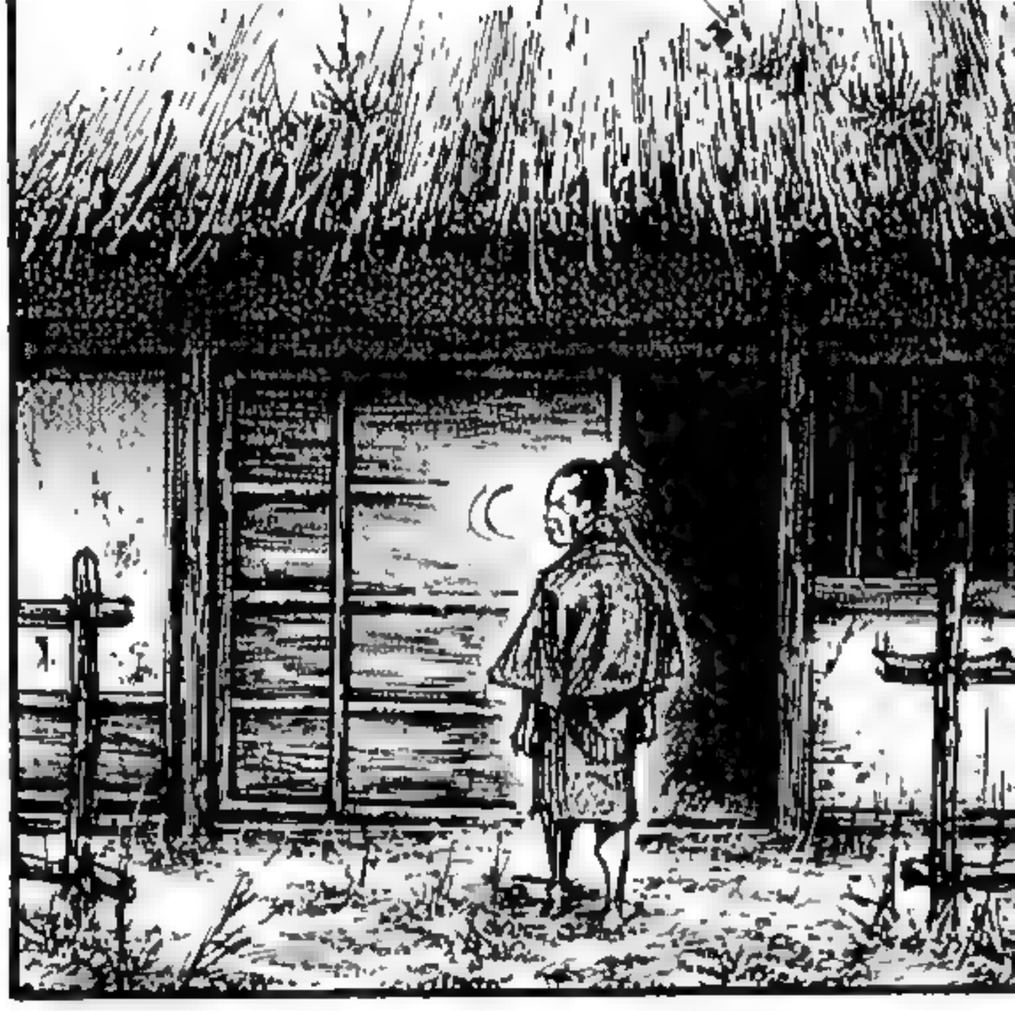
NO ONE CAN STAND YOU!
YOU WORKED ALONE.
YET YOU MANAGE. IN FACT, YOU GET A GOOD CROP!

IORI, YOU MUST BE HUNGRY.
I'LL GIVE YOU SOME LEFTOVER PORRIDGE.

LOOK CARE-FULLY.
CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE? I DOUBT IT.

YOU CAN'T HEAR IT WITH YOUR EARS.

YOU'LL NEVER HEAR IT. NOT YOU.



YOU'D BE BETTER OFF DEAF IF YOU REALLY WANT TO HEAR IT.

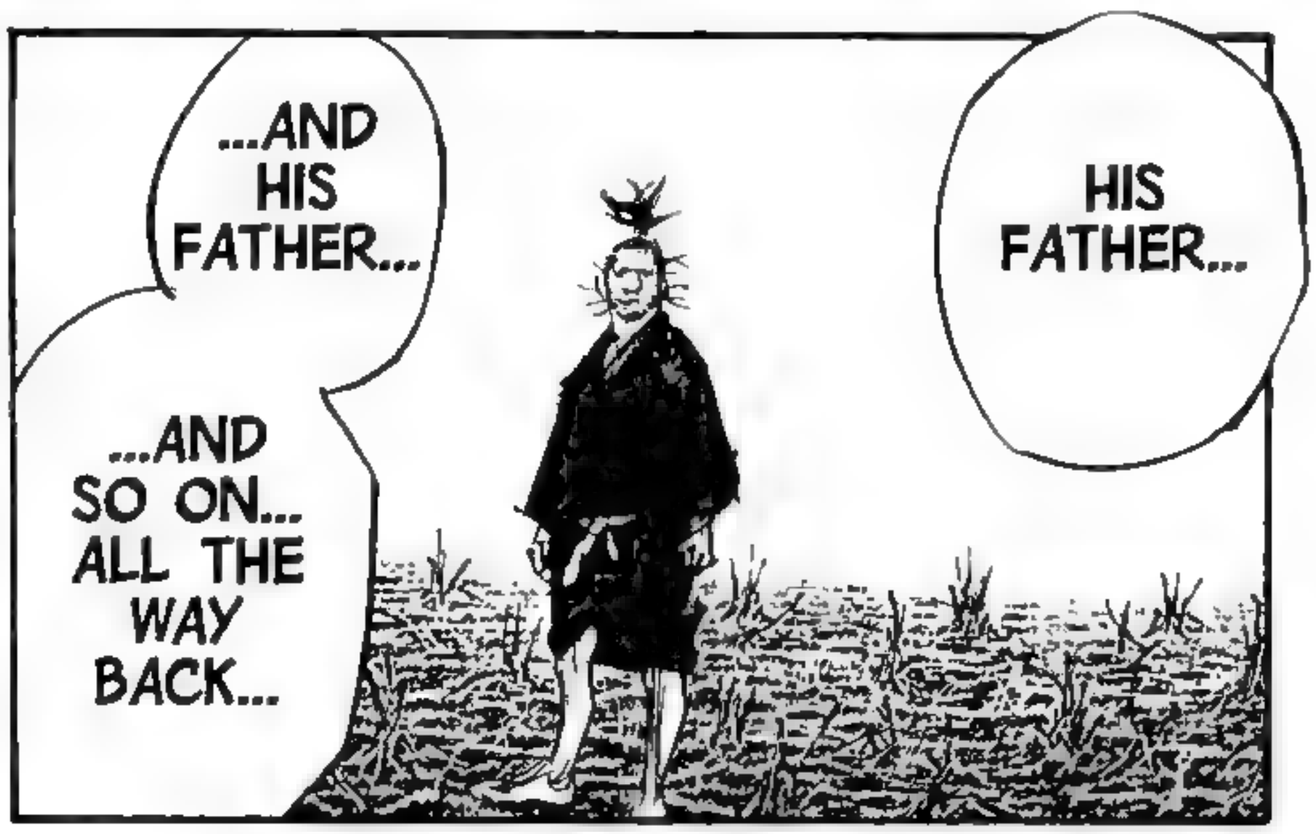
THE SOIL IS ALIVE.

MY FATHER WAS ALWAYS WATCHING OVER THE FIELDS.
HE DIED YOUNG.

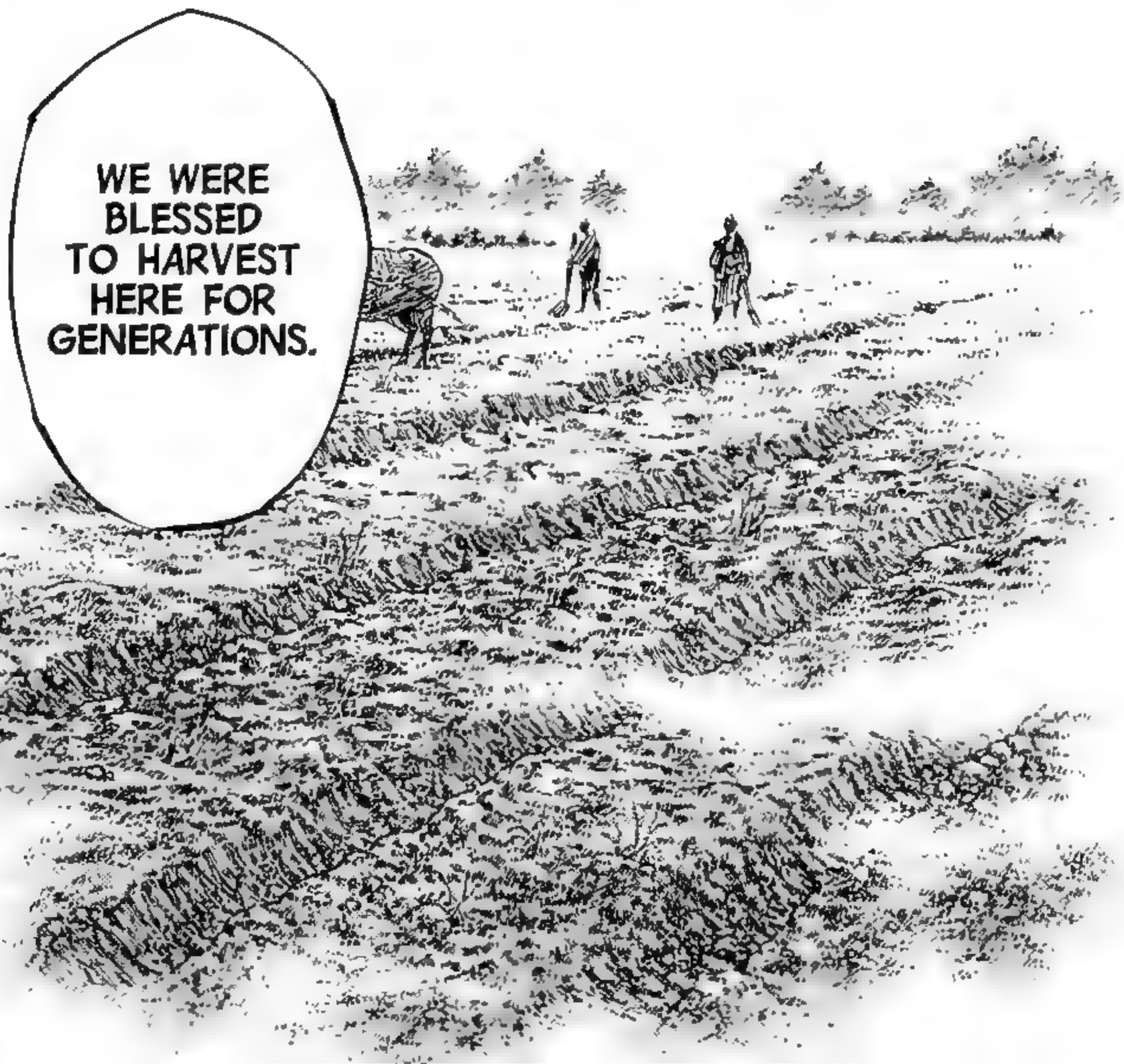
WHY...
?!

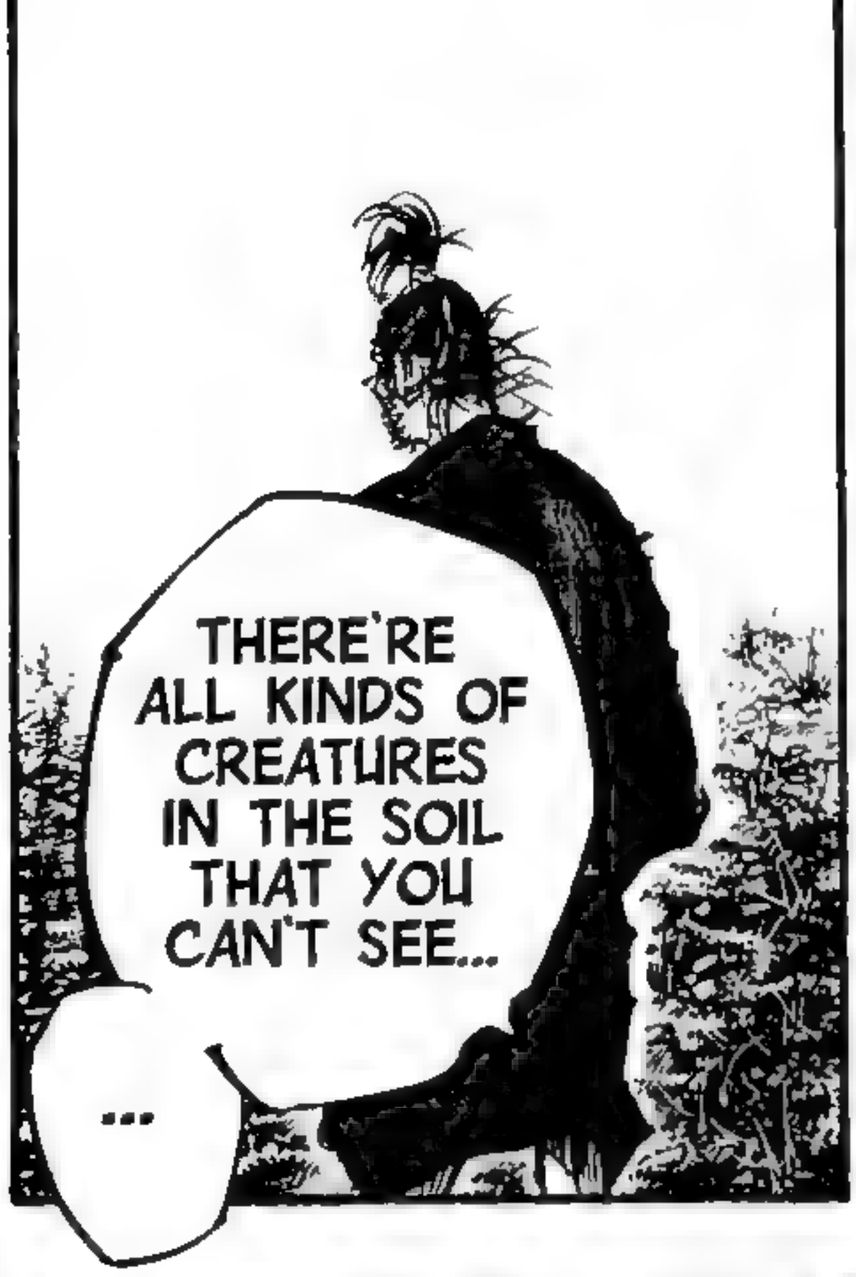
WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS YOUR FATHER?

...THIS SOIL HAS ALWAYS BEEN PLOWED BY MY ANCESTORS.

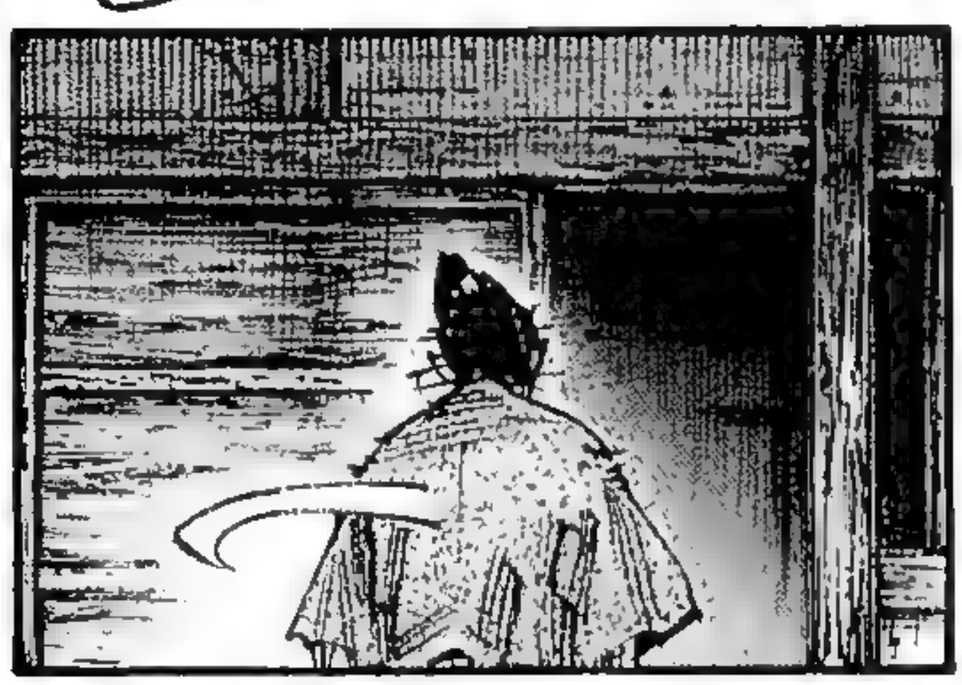

...AND HIS FATHER...
HIS FATHER...
...AND SO ON... ALL THE WAY BACK...

YOU SEE, I'M NOT DOING THIS ON MY OWN.


WE WERE BLESSED TO HARVEST HERE FOR GENERATIONS.


THERE'RE ALL KINDS OF CREATURES IN THE SOIL THAT YOU CAN'T SEE...
...

IT'S NOT JUST PEOPLE.
BUGS...



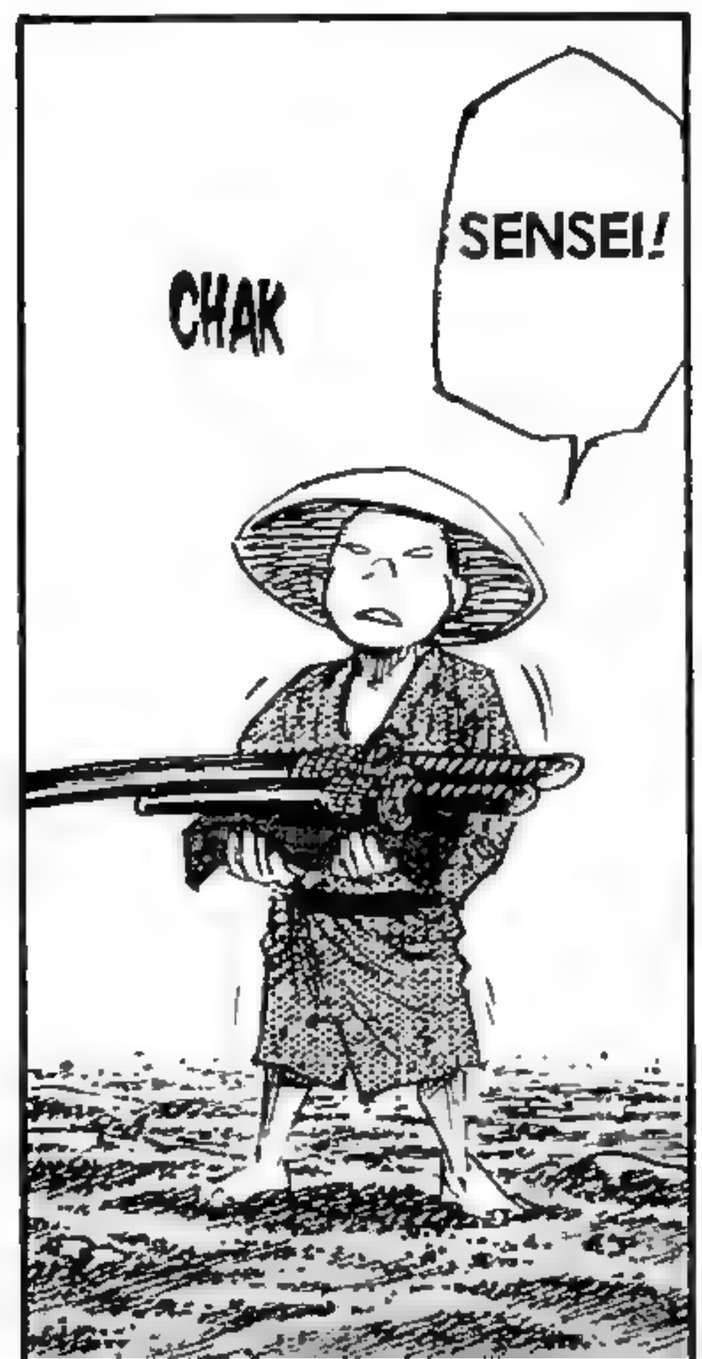
?

I'M WAST-ING MY TIME.
FORGET IT.

NO POINT IN TALKING TO A SAMURAI WHO THINKS HE CAN JUST FORCE THINGS THROUGH WITH HIS SWORD.

FICH

WE ARE GOING TO KOKURA!!
MUSASHI, GATHER YOUR THINGS.


CHAK
SENSEI!

YES, SIR.
...
TMP

YOU MAY NOT EVEN MANAGE TO SURVIVE IF YOU STAY HERE.

YOU COULD STARVE TO DEATH.

I NEVER SAID I WOULD JOIN YOU.

...

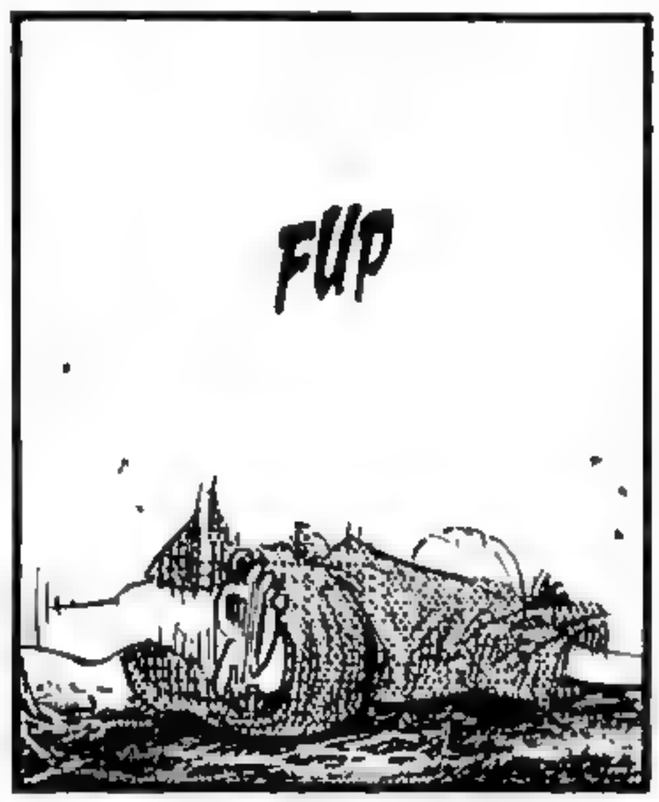
IT'S NOT CLEAR.

FWOMP
?!

NOT JUST WANTING TO...
BUT...
...TO ACTUALLY BE STRONG.

I WANT TO BE STRONG.

...


FUP

I DON'T GET IT.
?
?
?

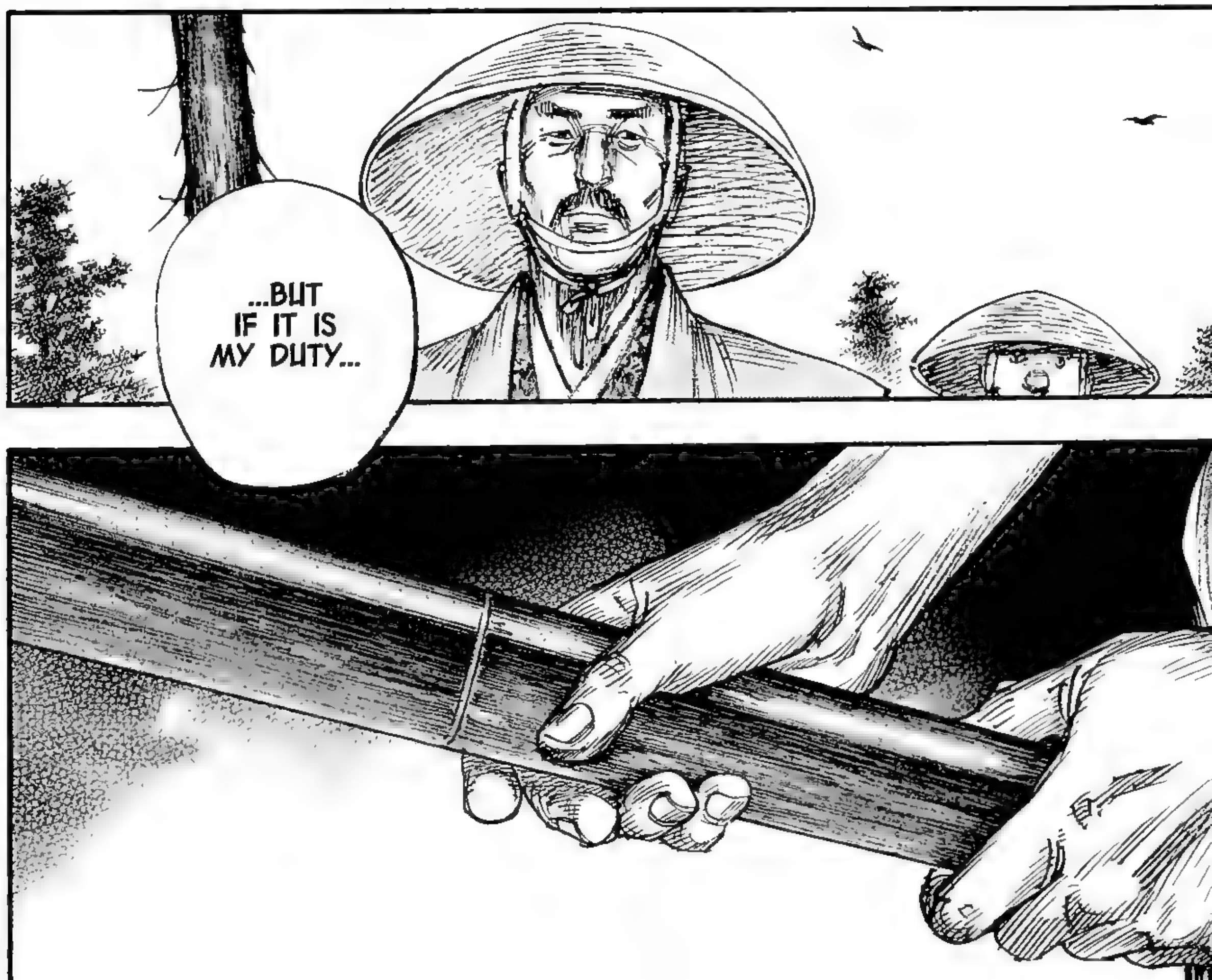
I DON'T HAVE TO GO ANYWHERE.

I'M DONE TRAVELING AROUND...
...IN PURSUIT OF BEATING THE "INVINCIBLE."

I'M STAYING HERE.

IT IS AGAINST OUR WISHES, BUT IF WE MUST FORCE YOU...
!
...THEN WE MUST...

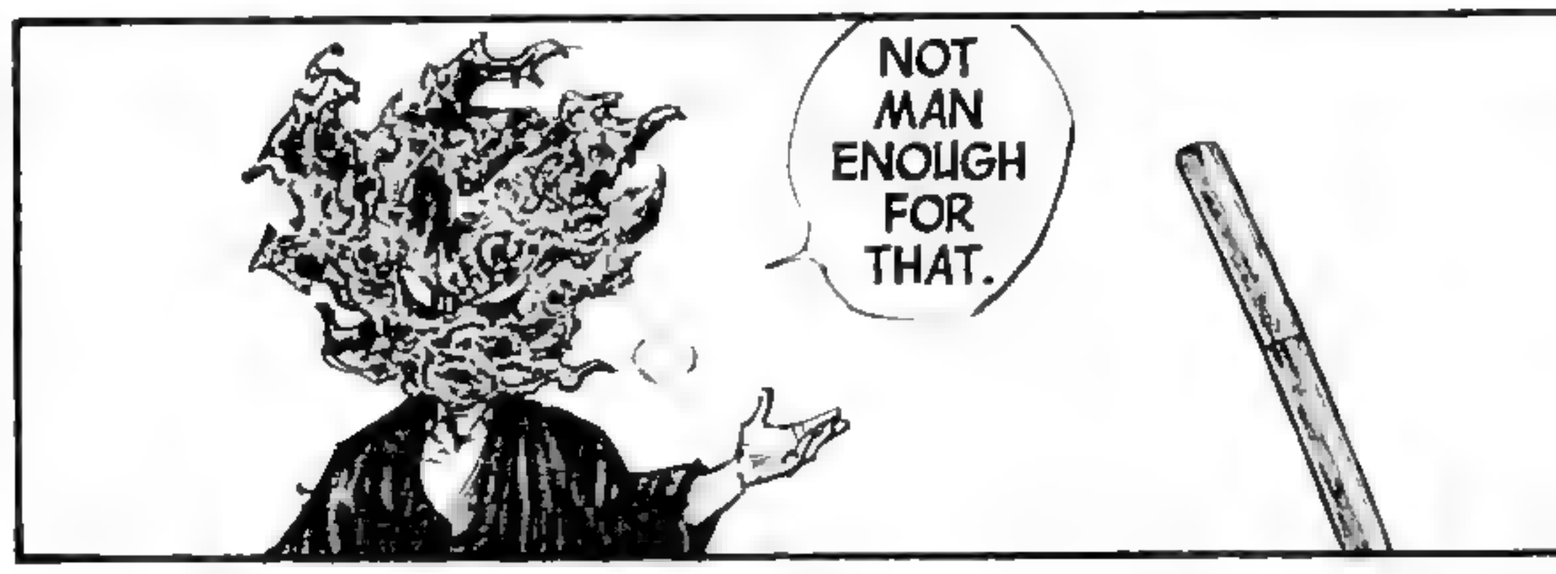
I AM NOT SO CONFIDENT I CAN DO THIS WITHOUT KILLING YOU...



...
TUP

TUNK

BY FORCE?



WE NEED YOUR HELP.

I WANT TO HAVE HOPE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

Vagabond

End of volume 35

何も持たない――。
水のように、地のように。
〝素〟であり〝全て〟であるように。
一方で、武蔵は天に抗い、
水路を田畠を墾こうとする。
父を亡くした〝土の子〟伊織と
共に暮らしながら。

"VAGABOND" VOLUME 35.

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井上雄彦

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MORNING KC

モーニングKC 2195

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現状では、
最も我が身を助けてくれるものは
睡眠という結論に達しました。

井上雄彦

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